

New Statesman



TAKING LIBERTIES

John Griffith on law and the State

**PLUS: Chancellor Nigel • Bradford schooling •
Greek elections • Black publishing • Arts**



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WEEKEND

Judges with their legs in the air

John Griffith on politics and the law 25

NEWS

4-6

HOME

Peter Kellner: the GLC showdown 7

Martin Linton: Mrs T's Treasury poodle 8

David Blake: beneath the budget gobbledygook 9

Paul Flather: after they refused Mrs Thatcher a degree 10

Rob Edwards: sparks at Scottish Labour Party conference 13

Barry Hugill: coalition on race in Bradford schools 14

George Tremlett: Thatcherism is cracking 15

Michael Coren: Jewish/Black relations 16

FOREIGN

Stephen Cohen: power struggles in the Kremlin 19

NEXT WEEK

Francis Mulhern on women writing the future

Colin Sweet on energy policy

Stan Accrington in praise of ice hockey

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Yiannis Roubatis: Papandreou's bold move 20
Jane Dibblin: moves to bridge the East/West divide 22

BOOKS

Margaret Busby: The burgeoning of the Black book trade in Britain 28

Ben Okri: The pain of being a Black writer in Britain 29

Adewale Maja-Pearce: The reclaiming of African writing by Africa 30

Alan Brien: Paperbacks 31

Liz Heron: New fiction 32

Shorter reviews 33

ARTS

John Spurling: Munch's work 34

Francis Wheen: *Carmen* and other new films 35

Benedict Nightingale: Theatre 36

Charles Fox: 'Race records' 36

Stephanie Jordan: Royal ballet 37

BACKCHAT

Michael Lewis: On being a specimen 38

Naseem Khan: Work in progress watches miners' campaign videos 39

Hugo Williams: Television 40

Weekend competition 40

Crossword 41

PLUS

This England 22

Mediawatch: Mandy Merck 17

Diary: Islander 18

Roger Woddis 18

Letters 23

Slump 23

Negative vibes about Geneva

PERHAPS WE SHOULD have broken with our normal pattern and printed Roger Woddis's poem (which appears on page 18) in this space instead. For the truth is that what has been happening in the Kremlin over the period of Chernenko's decline remains an enigma to outsiders.

The instant experts, who now talk of 'Camelot' in Moscow, are the same instant experts who were telling us only a month ago that front-running heir apparents seldom succeed to the general secretaryship of the Soviet Union. All we can observe for certain is that this time — in marked contrast, say, to what happened over the shooting down of Korean Airlines Flight 007 — the Kremlin had a script ready and performed to it at once and on cue. Also, there is no hint of the military advancing — as it did over KL007 — towards centre stage. This, though, will not stop those who return from Moscow, having briefly pumped the Gorbachev flesh, from confidently claiming special insight.

Common sense would predict that for several years, while the style and presentation of Soviet policy and attitudes may change, their substance would not. As Stephen Cohen argues on page 19, the decision-making processes of the Soviet Union since 1953 have been increasingly centred on broking between the vested interests of entrenched elites. There is no reason to suppose that Gorbachev, simply by being younger than 60, could or would want to change that system.

This perception is critical for the US-Soviet nuclear disarmament talks that have got off to their scheduled start, despite the Kremlin funeral. For there is a real danger that Washington, where TV-centred politics often have more to do with style than with content, will chose to misread the signs from Moscow, with disastrous consequences for us all.

Public opinion in the West is overwhelmingly in favour of progress towards ending the nuclear arms race. This sentiment goes way beyond the ranks of the active peace movement. There is, however, absolutely no evidence that the US arms control team, or the Reagan Administration as a whole, shares this concern.

For any Geneva negotiation to succeed in substance there will have to be a minimal degree of trust on both sides, and a willingness to make concessions. The central question so far as Washington is concerned can be reduced to this: is the Soviet Union a bureaucratic empire in an expansionist mood, or is it neurotically defensive about its capacity to preserve the status quo? Both strands will certainly be present in the creaking system that Gorbachev has inherited, but which is dominant?

The evidence — historical and contemporary — would seem to be overwhelming. Economically, militarily, politically, the Soviet system gives the impression of feeling itself to be at bay, surrounded by superior forces. Yet the Reagan Administration (and others like *Times* and *Telegraph* leader writers) persist in the view that the Soviet Union can only be got to any bargaining table by the display of complete superiority in all departments. The difference in analysis is absolutely critical. For the 'big stick' approach — MX missiles, Star Wars, cruise, Pershing — is pre-doomed if neurotic insecurity is indeed Moscow's dominant condition.

The danger now is that the funeral parties will return with the impression that Gorbachev's Moscow is so much easier to deal with and so determined to press on with domestic economic reforms that it is bound to 'give' more at Geneva, if only the 'pressure' is maintained. If the pressure is maintained, we are likely to discover soon enough that Comrade Gorbachev in practice is broking exactly like his predecessors. □

Not Ken Livingstone's finest hour

'ALL RIGHT, Arthur', the Labour Party leader is supposed to have said to the President of the National Union of Mineworkers at an early, but even then frosty, meeting last year, 'what's the strategy for winning the strike?' Answer (so this version of the story goes) came there none. The same question, it seems, should have been put to the ruling Labour groups on the Greater London Council and the Inner London Education Authority.

Winning, of course, is not always a clear-cut concept in politics. The Thatcher-MacGregor 'victory' over the NUM was, because of its manner and insensitivity only achieved at the cost of having to absorb heavy political and moral damage. At every stage of the battle to impose a ceiling on 'rebel' councils' rates and to abolish the GLC and the Met counties, Mr Patrick Jenkin has been made to appear both autocratic and incompetent. There is an important difference between winning or losing the practical and tactical battle at the time and winning hearts or changing minds for the future.

The miners and the rebel local authorities had one important element in common. They both raised a standard of resistance to the still-advancing tide of Thatcherism. The official Opposition was not doing so effectively at a political level. Nor were other

parts of the trade union movement. The legal system was not protecting the citizen from major attacks on existing civil liberties. The academic world, particularly the economists, seemed to have given up. The national media increasingly echoed the Tory message.

But there the similarity between the two acts of open rebellion ceases. Once it was clear that Nottingham was effectively going to continue producing coal and the greater part of the rail and road transport industry to move it, the NUM leadership had no strategy that was capable of winning the strike industrially, or bringing down the Tory government politically. But, despite the refusal to hold any national ballot and despite the television images of picket-line violence, the miners were engaged in a dignified battle for the survival of their communities that even in defeat has changed the reference points for British politics in 1985. Mrs Thatcher's pyrrhic victory over the miners has done her government permanent political damage.

By contrast the local government campaign, either against rate-capping or against abolition, has not reached out into communities or achieved new political involvement and awareness. The anti-government advertising campaigns have had a considerable superficial success, especially in London. Public opinion polls have been swung in the right direction. The completely arbitrary nature of the rate capping decisions that the Department of the Environment is making have been exposed; but the people, by and large, have not been moved to the positive defence of their local government.

In London, for example, there was on the face of it potential. Schools and public transport, just to take two examples, concern people greatly. But the mounting of opposition in the main was confined to Labour group caucus meetings of one kind or another and to advertising on hoardings and in the press. As Peter Kellner recounts on page 7, Labour group caucusing fell apart with a vengeance so far as the GLC was concerned last weekend. It was not Ken Livingstone's finest hour.

Once the mutual recrimination has died, however, the mess that Patrick Jenkin has created in local government must be examined afresh. The instant and automatic reaction on the Left has been that the Jenkin attack on local government must be resisted on the basis of a defence of the status quo. But the status quo was already highly unsatisfactory.

The elaborate, expensive and nominally democratic structures of two-tier local government that have evolved over the past three decades are currently giving us the worst of all worlds. Their local functions are usually entirely remote from those they are supposed to effect. Successive governments have centralised control of local government finance and reduced areas of real local government autonomy to the point where there is little administrative or political validity to what is being done in the often rather self-important name of local government. In this respect, what Patrick Jenkin is doing is only the last draconian extension of trends that have long been at work to centralise all local government power in the hands of the Department of the Environment and the Treasury.

The longer term reform of local government needs to have two perspectives. Labour in Scotland appears pretty firmly to have committed the party nationally to some form of devolved government for Edinburgh. Any move down that road would have to be in the context of wider regional government for Wales, the English regions and some arrangement for Ulster. Whatever is done in that direction would set a framework for considering a proper reconstitution of the lower levels of local government in the United Kingdom.

The essential of any reform is that nominal responsibility and real power should go together again, in place of the present position where dignified local government has been rendered mainly powerless. That, as we have seen, is a recipe for the worst kind of 'gesture politics'. □



VEIL LIFTS ON RAF'S SECRET WORKS IN KENT

A MAJOR NEW underground radar control centre has been constructed in Kent, the Ministry of Defence admitted to the *New Statesman* this week. The new centre, being built next to a civilian radar station at Ash, near Canterbury, will be one of four 'Control Reporting Centres' for a new radar network, UKADGE (UK Air Defence Ground Environment) which the MoD hopes will come into service during 1987. DUNCAN CAMPBELL reports

UNTIL last week, a veil of security has been drawn over the purpose of the massive underground works at the Kent site. The development was referred to in planning applications as the 'refurbishment and extension of an existing underground structure' — in fact a small and derelict A-bomb proof bunker of 1950s vintage — and Dover district council was asked to

suppress information about the development, as it involved 'an important national security and defensive role... it is requested that the proposal is only notified to those whom it is essential'.

Kent county council officials also contrived to 'avoid a site description' of MoD plans at Ash being given to the council's planning committee.

Ash is the only wholly new military site in a chain of six underground headquarters for the UKADGE radar system. The other radar control centres are at Buchan near Aberdeen, Boulmer near Alnwick, and Neatishead near Norwich. All are existing RAF radar stations whose underground portions have been rebuilt over the last four years. A five storey underground Air Defence Operations Centre is approaching completion at High Wycombe — controversially sited on National Trust land, now leased to the MoD — and a Standby Air Defence Operations Centre has been rebuilt at Stanmore in suburban northwest London.

The Ash site is presently operated by the Civil Aviation Authority, and is used to help control civil air traffic

passing to and through the London area. Concerned local groups have, however, hitherto been unable to discover the purpose of the extremely large and increasingly visible underground annexe to the civil station.

The UKADGE system is due to start operation in 1987, but has, like every other postwar British radar system, faced substantial difficulties — which, in the past, have invariably led to substantial parts of the system being ditched as either unworkable or unnecessary, soon after completion.

UKADGE is still officially 'on target' for 1987, but major difficulties have arisen with computer software being developed by the Marconi company. Marconi have also recently been responsible for major delays and huge extra costs for airborne radar early warning control stations — Nimrod AEW aircraft — which are supposed to link into UKADGE. In January, it was admitted that the Nimrod project was at least five years late, and would cost at least £500 million over its original budget. ●

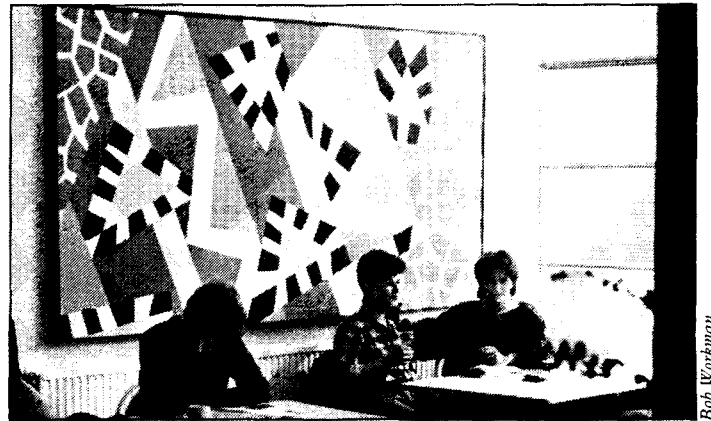
GLC rates row threatens the deputy leader

FOLLOWING last week's row at the GLC over rate-capping strategy moves are afoot to unseat the deputy leader of the ruling Labour Group, John McDonnell. The 'hard' left chair of the finance and general purposes committee publicly criticised GLC leader Ken Livingstone over the GLC's failure to adopt an illegal strategy of refusing to fix a rate.

McDonnell could lose his finance chair and the deputy leadership in May. His likely successor as Livingston's no 2 would be Mike Ward, the GLC's industry chair who moved the proposal to fix a legal rate at the Labour group meeting last week.

Steve Hayward

GLC 'monument' opens



From a gleam in the eye three years ago to today's sun-drenched reception area

A STONE'S THROW from the *New Statesman's* offices (and surely someone will try and prove this) the London Lesbian and Gay Centre has now opened its doors. Funded by the GLC to the tune of around £750,000 as part of its commitment to projects by lesbian and gay groups in London, the centre when fully opened will be the largest of its kind in the world — bigger even than those in San Francisco and New York.

It has five floors housing cafe, bars, discos, theatre space, creche, meeting room, print resource centre and dark room, office space and a book shop. Although the decorations aren't yet completed on all floors — shortage of money has led to some areas being finished by volunteer labour — the 11 full-time staff are already providing most of the facilities which will be available when the centre is fully functioning.

With the granting this week of a licence to serve alcohol excitement is building towards an official opening on 11 April. Completion and official opening will have been achieved in the face of great hostility from both local and national press and from politicians who tried to make political capital out of the homophobia engendered by the funding of such a large project.

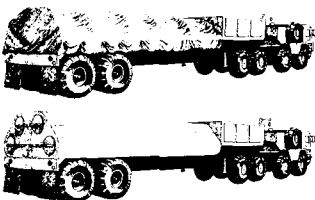
The London Lesbian and Gay Centre may well turn out to be the most visible monument to the political courage of the current GLC administration in funding 'unpopular' minority based projects. It is also a monument to the unusual experience of a large number of lesbians and gay men collaborating successfully on a mixed project over a period of almost three years. Such collaboration will be increasingly necessary to combat anti-gay hysteria over AIDS. (See also Feedback p24).

Linda Semple

Yes, they were dummies

FOLLOWING revelations in the *New Statesman* (see 1 March) of the strange vehicles posing as cruise missile launchers, the Minister of Defence has admitted that our suspicions were correct.

In a written reply to Gavin Strang MP (Labour, Edinburgh



East), Heseltine says there are 'a number of driver training vehicles which simulate the size, shape and weight of the major cruise missile vehicles.'

So... these famous excursions destined to show that protestors cannot hinder military training don't only leave the missiles behind at base, but they even use dummy vehicles. Funny, really, that learner drivers are at the wheel of genuine automobiles, trainee bus drivers take out big red buses but soldiers are too

careless to be trusted with the real thing.

Jane Dibblin

THE CONTROVERSIAL defence agreement under which plutonium from Britain's nuclear power stations has been sent to America for use in nuclear weapons has been extended to last for the next ten years. It was due to expire at end-1984, but, unnoticed by MPs or anti-nuclear groups, was amended in the autumn to stretch until the end of 1994.

This was confirmed this week in a written Parliamentary answer to Plaid Cymru MP Dafydd Elis Thomas. The agreement's renewal, which may be connected with the development of Trident, is bound to rekindle fears that British civil plutonium could find its way into American weapons. In the past plutonium from both Britain's civil and military programmes has been swapped for American highly enriched uranium and tritium which have been used here for military purposes (*New Statesman* 13 July 1984). At the weekend, the Labour Party's Scottish conference overwhelmingly passed a motion calling for the halting of plutonium exports to the US.

Rob Edwards

'Best film of the strike' is postponed by the Beeb

A DOCUMENTARY about Welsh mining families due to be shown this Sunday (17 March) has been 'postponed' by the BBC — though not actually banned — amid rumours of a politically-motivated decision.

Leading Welsh film maker Karl Francis, who directed *Ms Rhmney Valley '85*, and whose previous films are being screened at the National Film Theatre this month, has been ordered to make cuts. No alternative screening date has yet been offered.

A preview of the documentary by Welsh historian and writer Dai Smith has been dropped from the current issue of the *Listener*. He tells the *NS* 'It's an outstandingly good film. Not only is it the best thing yet by Karl Francis, it's the best film of the strike'.

Daffyd Ellis Thomas MP (Meirionnydd Nant Conwy), who was interviewed in the film, says he has written to the Beeb asking for an explanation after last Monday's

decision to postpone. 'It would appear the film is being deferred or controlled. It's the second Welsh production that this has happened to recently — a play on the Falklands, *The Mimosa Boys*, has been postponed twice.'

A BBC spokesman said 'It's quite usual for cuts to be asked for'. It appears that Francis has already cut 15 minutes and is reluctant to chop more, despite pressure from the top at the BBC.

While there has been no hint of the BBC banning it, people who have been involved with the film feel that it's being delayed for political reasons, as it presents a powerful and sympathetic portrayal of mining men and women. It's being suggested that the BBC would like to maintain a cautious political stance while licence fees are under discussion — and that if the film gathers dust for some months the strike will be viewed in the more cosy light of nostalgia.

Jane Dibblin

Treasury to try on a sneaky Commons ploy

THE GOVERNMENT is planning to sneak a bill through Parliament in the next session which would mean sweeping powers for ministers effectively to tax profitable nationalised industries and set their financial targets in order to raise revenue for the Treasury. To avert open warfare with the state industries, Conservative managers plan to employ the rarely used 'negative procedure' to force ministerial orders through the Commons.

Under this procedure, a draft of the statutory order must be laid before the House of Commons. However, if it's not challenged within 40 days, the bill is passed without discussion. If it is queried by MPs then a 90-minute debate is granted, but must take place after 10 pm. Given the government's 143-seat majority it means these ministerial orders could be made the law of the land with virtually no public scrutiny.

The plan was first drafted by Peter Rees, chief secretary to the Treasury, in the Parliamentary holiday season on 3 August, 1984, but details were leaked on the eve of the Liberal Party conference the next month. The proposals were to have been included in the Queen's Speech last November, but had to be hastily withdrawn after widespread condemnation from all parties.

Many Tory back-benchers were unhappy with the policy. Consequently, the Treasury waited until 3.30 pm on 20 December, 1984



City Syndication Ltd

Decidedly negative — Mr Rees

(see also *NS* 1 March) — the day Parliament broke up for Christmas recess — before they re-released the plan as 'a consultative document' without a press conference or press release.

Ministers have been careful not to refer to the paper publicly, although it was recently discussed in Cabinet. The proposed new powers would enable the Secretary of State to, among other things, 'allow all or part of reserves to be capitalised as debt and public dividend capital'. This amounts to back-door taxation by the Treasury, because state industries would be required to pay interest on their own accumulated reserve funds — despite the fact that several public corporations are already self-financed.

The nationalised industries are furious. One senior British Gas official described the plan as 'robbery', but Treasury Minister Peter Rees protests it merely 'updates existing statutes'.

Mark Hollingsworth

MISCELLANY

Beware Greeks etc

Des Wilson's Freedom of Information Campaign may have got itself a Trojan horse. One of its star recruits is Lord Croham, who as Sir Douglas Allen was head of the Treasury and then of the whole civil service. Quite a catch for the anti-Official Secrets Act brigade. Yet far from rejoicing with the rest of us at a British jury throwing out the charges against Ponting, our Douglas has been making no secret in private that he thought it was a catastrophic verdict and that Ponting should have been found guilty.

ROC's army

More than 2000 members of Britain's teams for radiation monitoring after a nuclear attack — the Royal Observer Corps — mobilise this weekend for the year's first full-scale nuclear war radiation fallout simulation, Exercise INTEX. But according to leaked instructions previously given to ROC members conducting these exercises, the greatest hazard now faced by the ROC is a heavy fallout of CND weekend picnic parties, flowers, unkind leaflets, children and such subversive acts as superglue in the massive padlocks which guard the entrance to the 870 ROC bunkers scattered throughout Britain. On detecting CND either within or without the monitoring posts (which unfortunately lack periscopes with which to observe events at ground level), ROC members are instructed that 'No verbal exchange should take place. — UTTER NOT A SINGLE WORD'.

If prevented from entering the bunker, the unfortunate team is instructed to go instead, carrying its exercise material, to a telephone well away from the site — a private one is preferable to a call box. If caught embunkered, they are ordered to sit tight until 'the demonstration has been dispersed by police', or the exercise is over. Prudent ROC observers are advised to bring extra sandwiches and a supply of water. If the worst comes to the worst, instructions continue, nuclear wartime ration packs may be eaten up — but only 'in total emergency'.

Breathtaking gall

The presidency of the National Society for Clean Air falls vacant in



October and we are delighted, in *This England* mode, to state that Sir Walter Marshall has allowed his name to be put forward — indeed would be happy to accept. As head of the CEEGB, which produces more sulphur dioxide air pollution than any other organisation in W Europe (one-eighth of the region's total), he'd be ideal. Next week: Ptolemy runs for presidency of the Copernicus Society.

Duff journalism

No doubt grovelling in pursuit of knighthoods for his two chauffeurs Sunday Times editor Andrew Neil has 'progressed' in two weeks from blacking out the face of the current MI5 director general Sir John Jones (3 March) to



Camera Press

No caption, at MI5's request

refusing to publish any photo at all of his hot tip for the next DGM15, Sir Antony Duff (10 March). No pic, said writers Barrie Penrose and John Witherow, standard bearers of the Fourth Estate, 'at the request of the security services'. Well, well. Here he is from one of London's picture agencies. And his phiz was in *NS* 16 April 1982, copies of which were and are, of course, restricted to members of the Cabinet.

Ana Gram finale

And now Ana Gram is calling it a yad. Grey in the service of the *NS* readership, Ana will never more be found, other than at El Vino's of a Saturday recalling past glories . . . Leon Brittan, an inert blot, Roy Hattersley, the Tory slayer, Stan Orme, a monster, 'Sir' Peter Shore, to err is herpes, Hilda Margaret Thatcher, halt that mad grim preacher, and greater than all these, Nigel Lawson, with whom we all sign on. Under various pseudonyms the royals themselves, we deduce, have entered for Ana's last fling, Wilyum. Writing as Gail Addis of Glasgow, Princess Di offers 'A! HRH Willi is our I'll muppet'; Anne, writing as Katie Mallet of Essex, proposes 'Hi! Will is our trial ham pupil'; and Prince Philip, writing as John O'Byrne of Dublin, takes sides with 'I-I-Hurrah! I support Millwall'. That kid had better learn to spell. Farewell.

Alarm mounts over police 'brutality'

A BELIEF that police may have acquired a permanent habit of 'pre-emptive' brutality towards demonstrators, far harsher than in the past, as a result of behaviour licensed during the miners' strike, is fast gathering pace.

Manchester Students Union wants a special enquiry into behaviour of 'Tactical Aid Group' officers when Leon Brittan addressed Conservative

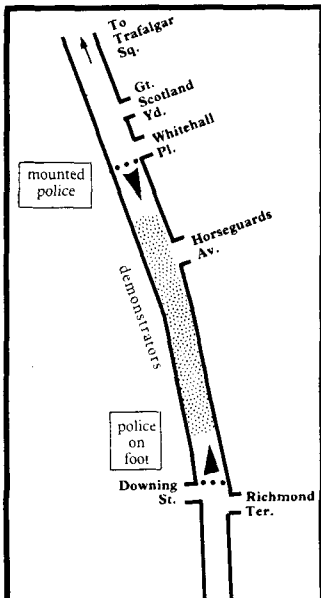


David Sillitoe

Foot police in action in Whitehall (above) and (below) 'pincer movement' on miners' supporters before they could reach Trafalgar Square (24 February)

students on 1 March — 10 students were taken to hospital, and 38 were arrested (court appearances due this Friday 15 March).

And Cathie Lloyd, of Cities of London & Westminster Public Order Research Group (9 Poland St, W1) is still collecting data on the conduct of mounted and foot police on the Support the Miners march in Whitehall on 24 February, when about 100 were arrested.



Flag flies in London for women's week

CROSS-CULTURAL co-operation is the overwhelming theme of events organised for the GLC-funded International Women's Week — launched on the terrace of County Hall last Friday (8 March, International Women's Day since 1909) when Valerie Wise, chair of the GLC Women's Committee, raised the specially designed flag.

Thought to be the most comprehensive commemoration of International Women's Day ever organised in a capital city, with participation by 29 boroughs and 14 departments of the GLC itself, events in fact spread from March 7-20, at a cost of some £500,000.

Contributions from within the GLC itself have included an exhibition by its scientific services branch ('Women in Science and How Science Affects Women'), and the refuse department's 'open day' for

women to try out heavy plant. (Very popular, but arousing the most media attention).

Tamil Women's League, Solidarity Committee of Women's Rights in Turkey, London Arab Women's Group, Irish women's groups, Theatre of Black Women, and Women's Action Committee for the Defence of Nicaragua, are among groups who have participated. This Wednesday (13 March) was Lesbian Day.

The opening day was marred by a public row in which the deputy-chair of the Womens Committee, Jenni Fletcher, criticised Valerie Wise for, among other things, susceptibility to 'a radical feminist analysis which places anti-heterosexism [too] high on the list' [of priorities]. Similar attacks were made last year (see NS 21 December, *Love and the GLC*).

Andrew Lumsden



Except that it had to come down again throughout Sunday 10 March for — oh Goddess! — Prince Edward's birthday, Valerie Wise with the special flag, in purple and green

INNOCENT WOMEN IN PRISON (3)

IN THE THIRD of our series examining some leading cases of seemingly wrongful imprisonment, where the common factor is that all are women, we look at the case of CAROLE RICHARDSON. Earlier cases examined were MARGARET LIVESEY (NS 1 March) and ANNIE MAGUIRE, now released having completed her sentence (NS 22 February)

IN OCTOBER 1975 Carole Richardson, along with Paul Hill, Gerard Conlon and her boyfriend Patrick Armstrong, was found guilty of murder and of conspiring to cause an explosion in what was known as the Guildford & Woolwich pub-bombings case. The Guildford bombs had exploded on 5 October 1974, when Carole was only 17. She was ordered to be detained during Her Majesty's pleasure.

Her arrest had followed 'confessions' made by Hill and Conlon (which also incriminated Annie Maguire). These had been made under considerable pressure. The only subsequent evidence against Richardson was that she too was alleged to have confessed in police custody.

There are abundant reasons for believing that she had nothing to do with the crimes. Her 'confession' contained no information which wasn't already known to the police.

Although not herself Irish, she'd been living in an Irish squat in Kilburn. To the average *Sun* reader, perhaps, a Kilburn squat might seem the obvious place for IRA bombers to hole up. In practice, it would have been both dangerous and unnecessary. The IRA has never been short of funds, and squats are

routinely raided by police. This had actually happened to Armstrong and Richardson on three occasions just before the bombings. Each time they had given their correct names.

A few weeks after the Guildford attacks, they hitch-hiked together. Just outside Folkestone, a drunk punched Richardson. Armstrong dialled 999 and called in the police — hardly the instinctive reaction of a terrorist on the run.

Corroborated alibi

A more fundamental reason for believing Richardson innocent is that she was somewhere else at the time of the Guildford explosions. She had always said she couldn't remember where she was on that Saturday evening. While she was in custody, though, friends came forward to say she had been with them at a dance at the South Bank Polytechnic, at the Elephant & Castle, London. The alibi received precise corroboration from



Carole Richardson, some years ago

both the doorman and members of the band, who knew her.

At the trial, prosecuting QC Sir Michael Havers — now Attorney-General — suggested it would have been possible for her to have left the bomb in the Guildford pub, and still

had time to return to London to establish an alibi. If, however, the IRA had gone to great trouble to give her an alibi, why was she unable to remember it?

In any case, the theory conflicted with the testimony of several of the pub witnesses, who said that those assumed to have planted the bomb had departed at a time when Richardson was known to be at the dance. Altogether, she was put in 30 identity parades before pub witnesses, none of whom picked her out.

Alastair Logan, the Guildford solicitor who represented Armstrong, was so convinced of the innocence of the four that he put out feelers to the IRA. Eventually, he received a message telling him to contact the four men remanded in custody after the Balcombe Street siege in December 1975.

Their spokesman, Joseph O'Connell, admitted responsibility for the explosions. He remembered incidents from inside the pub which tallied with witness statements that had never been produced in court. At his own trial, O'Connell made a statement from the dock, saying that 'four totally innocent people are serving massive sentences for three bombings which we have admitted that we did'.

The appeal was heard in October 1977. It was dismissed. The Court decided that, although the Balcombe St people had been involved, they must have acted in concert with Richardson and co. This verdict contradicted the prosecution case originally presented, in which it had been made clear that five people had been involved.

Carole Richardson has now served over 10 years of her indeterminate sentence, which, the Home Office tells the NS, is being reviewed. She is now in Styal prison, Cheshire.

Bob Woffinden



PETER KELLNER

Left out in the cold after the GLC fiasco

KEN LIVINGSTONE would have done well to remember the words of Jan Masaryk. Masaryk was Czechoslovakia's socialist foreign minister after the second world war, until 1948 when he was murdered by the Russians (unless you believe Tass, in which case he committed suicide). Masaryk was once asked whether the proper role for his country was to act as a bridge between East and West. 'The trouble with being a bridge is that the horses keep galloping over', he replied, 'and crap all over you'. Last weekend, as the Labour group on the Greater London Council buckled under the pressure of rate-capping, Livingstone tried to act belatedly as a bridge between the rival wings of the party. And they crapped all over him.

The story of how Livingstone came to find himself in his malodorous posture is worth recounting: partly because it's a good yarn, partly because it contains important lessons for Labour's Left and partly because the new disarray on the Left — coming within a week of the end of the miners' strike — is likely to have substantial repercussions.

Let us start — well, not quite at the beginning, but with the two sets of battle lines drawn up within the party. Neil Kinnock and John Cunningham, Labour's shadow environment minister, consistently set out the case for rate-capped councils staying within the law. Last month, at Labour's local government conference in Birmingham, Kinnock declared:

What our people — the people who elected us — are saying is: 'better a dented shield than no shield at all. Better a Labour council doing its best to help us than government placemen extending the full force of government policy'.

However, until last week, appearances were maintained that the 17 Labour rate-capped councils would together take a different stand — and refuse to set a legal rate. Last November a gathering of representatives from the 17 councils met at the Sobell centre in Islington and agreed on this. Warnings were given, by Sheffield's David Blunkett among others, that this would prove too brittle a policy to survive for long; in particular he drew attention to the position of the four 'precepting' authorities — the GLC, ILEA, Merseyside and South Yorkshire. These four were legally required to set a rate by 10 March.

Blunkett proposed that the precepting authorities should set the maximum possible legal rate and that the guerilla campaign against Patrick Jenkin should be left to the lower-tier councils, which had no specific deadline for setting a rate. Even last November Merseyside and South Yorkshire were unwilling to place themselves in the

front-line of defiance. But these warnings went largely unheeded, especially by the large London contingent. (The thirteen lower-tier rate-capped council's include eight London boroughs.)

From this point on, Labour's Left in London propelled itself into orbit and at a succession of meetings, culminating in a regional council meeting the weekend before last, committed itself to a policy of all-out defiance. Those who had doubts about the wisdom of this strategy kept those doubts to themselves.

However, when the GLC Labour group met on 4 March — the day after the regional council ended — the disagreements surfaced. By 24 votes to 18 the group voted to propose to last Thursday's full GLC meeting the maximum possible *legal* rate — in other words, the strategy that Blunkett had suggested four months earlier. Livingstone argued at the group meeting for a legal rate, but then, in a recorded vote (for the benefit of local activists checking on the ideological purity of comrades' behaviour), voted *against* it.

AMONG THE FACTORS that swayed some councillors was Reg Race's alternative strategy. Race is remembered, when at all, as the hard left MP for Wood Green, whose seat disappeared at the behest of the Boundaries Commissioners. The hardness now appears to have softened a little, or at least become more sophisticated. As part of a floating group of lobbyists, advisers and strategists whom the rates are funding to save local government from the ravages of the present government, Race came up with a plan to allow the GLC to do pretty well all it wanted to do in 1985/6, without breaking the law. A little trimming here, judicious use of reserves there, the odd bit of creative accounting — and, hey presto, the GLC could stay in business within Jenkin's limit.

Wittingly or unwittingly, Race had stumbled across the Achilles' heel of the London Left. The truth is that for the last two years the GLC has been awash with money. Privately Livingstone admits that he has been unable to spend everything he has; in the current year it is almost certain that the GLC will be substantially *under* budget.

This is not as incompetent or as haphazard as it sounds. After the Law Lords ruled that London Transport's original 'Fares fair' regime was illegal, the GLC had to raise extra rates in 1982/83 to pay off the costs that arose from the Law Lords ruling. But this was a one-off payment: it meant that in subsequent years the GLC could levy modest rate rises and still have cash to spare. The game plan was to have built up sufficient reserves — in

cash, property and various other forms — to be able to announce a rate *cut* this year, in time for the 1985 GLC elections.

But with the abolition of the elections and the impending destruction of the GLC, the accumulated assets became more of a political liability. In the words of one despairing GLC left-winger this week: 'What do you do when you've got plenty of money and want to fight the rate-capping legislation?'

Race's answer was, bluntly: spend it, and let gesture politics go hang. His strategy put the Left on the spot, for it removed at a stroke the argument that to defy the law was the only way to protect jobs and services. On the contrary: it was necessary to *obey* the law in order to protect jobs and services. In other words, the *only* reason for pursuing a policy of defiance was to fight a political battle with the government.

However, the only way Race's strategy could succeed, given the narrowness of Labour's majority on the GLC, was if every Labour councillor voted for it. Among other things, that would have involved Livingstone taking sides, and being seen to take sides, and carrying everyone with him. As it was, ten councillors insisted that a policy of non-compliance had been agreed to, and should be kept to.

So the only way, in the end, that the majority of Labour councillors could set a legal rate was to agree a budget that sufficient Conservatives would also accept. Hence a budget £55 million below the legal maximum set by Jenkin.

For the Left this sorry episode represents the latest of a long line of fractures. It gives fresh power to those people like Blunkett and Tom Sawyer, deputy general secretary of NUPE and rapidly emerging as an independently-minded left-winger on Labour's national executive. In an interview in the current issue of *Marxism Today* Blunkett says:

People have learnt the lessons of the past. Gesturism, individual go-it-alone charisma politics, the salvation of the political credibility of individuals as more important than the end goal, these things won't wash any more.

It is a lesson that not all 'people' on the GLC learnt in time. Last Sunday Sawyer was at County Hall trying to teach it, in the company of Larry Whitty, Labour's general secretary, and Audrey Wise, NEC left-winger and mother of Valerie. Their failure to change the minds of the ten committed opponents of setting a rate could have important consequences. The GLC vote has defined a new line between realists and fundamentalists in the Labour Party. If Neil Kinnock has a new spring in his step this week, it is no wonder. □

MRS THATCHER'S POODLE

Martin Linton charts the rise and rise of Nigel Lawson. As he presents his second Budget next week, he has established his Whitehall reputation as a minister who can 'deliver'

NO ONE SHOULD write Nigel Lawson off as a politician simply because he is not a nice man. He has a natural arrogance and aggression that makes him few friends and many enemies in the House of Commons. But those few friends include the Prime Minister and many of his Cabinet colleagues and, more surprisingly, most of the senior civil servants who work for him.

He is also clever. This is not always regarded as a desirable quality in the Conservative Party, but he has got as far as No.11 Downing Street with no particular constituency of support within the Conservative Party — defying all the political laws of gravity. He is not liked in Parliament. He is not liked at the party conference. He has no following either on the Left in the Bow Group or on the Right in the Monday Club. He is not particularly good at the despatch box or on television. But he's still up there.

What's more, he has got to the top with a known record for errors of judgment. At the age of 30, when he was city editor of the *Sunday Telegraph*, he received a letter from an unknown British Leyland executive asking if he could write a 'share-tipping' column which would build up a 'ghost' portfolio and follow its value month by month. His name was Jim Slater, who recalled in his biography:

I explained that I would need to be free to invest in the same shares as the 'ghost' portfolio, as otherwise the £30 an article that they offered would be ludicrous compensation for me. He accepted this, chose the pseudonym of 'Capitalist', and arranged for the column to commence.

In his book *Slater Walker*, the journalist Charles Raw points out the dangers inherent in this kind of deal:

The possible abuse is clear: the recommendation of a share often results in an increase in the price as readers rush in to buy and stockjobbers mark up the prices. A journalist can easily make money on the side by buying them before recommending them and selling them afterwards . . . Lawson knew too that an outside contributor would be more difficult to supervise than a staff man.

Slater undertook not to exploit his column for his personal financial gain. But Raw estimates that Slater made about £25,000 out of his Capitalist shares — the equivalent of something like £125,000 today — and that on a number of occasions he sold shares shortly after tipping them, thus making money by doing precisely the opposite of what he was advising readers of the *Sunday Telegraph* to do. Lawson was wholly unaware of this.

Despite his apparent naivety, Lawson was highly regarded as a journalist and had no political ambitions until he was sent to No. 10 in

1963 to work at first for Macmillan and then for Sir Alec Douglas-Home as a speech writer and economic adviser. Lawson, though, soon got the political bug. 'It's no good just being a critic on the sidelines', he thought. 'I ought to get out on the field and play.'

His second error of judgment came in 1966, soon after he became editor of the *Spectator*, when he applied for and received a council mortgage from the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea for £20,000, half the price of a house he shared with his first wife in Hyde Park Gate. This was a fortune, more like £100,000 today, at a time when council mortgages were meant for those too poor to qualify for a building society or commercial mortgage. There was a huge row in Parliament. It was difficult to say which was more politically naive on his part: to apply for the mortgage in the first place or to be surprised, as he was, by the reaction.

As editor of the *Spectator*, however, he developed a critique of the Wilson government that was very prescient. From early 1966 he began a lonely campaign for devaluation of the

pound and for floating exchange rates:

We have had the deflationary measures which will create idle resources. Now, therefore, is the right time to devalue the pound, so that those resources, instead of lying idle at immense human and economic cost, are diverted to producing for export. The greatest of all this Government's economic crimes will be if, when it does decide to reflate the economy, it does so again by reflatting demand at home . . .

And let there be no mistake about it: the latest measures will provide short-term relief to the pound at the cost of doing grievous long-term harm to the economy . . .

It is difficult to imagine Mr Wilson devaluing of his own free will. It is regrettable, but realistic, to conclude that the best hope lies in a crisis of confidence . . .

These prescient words provide a critique of his own defence of sterling in January 1985, nearly 20 years later. Labour MPs have been urging exactly the same policies on him in words that are almost exactly the same as his, right down to his insistence that 'there is another way of running the economy . . . there is an alternative', which is to expand exports by



John Minnion

Spotlight on Nigel

LAWSON's face is extraordinary. For a start, it dominates the rest of his body in a manner which other faces do not. It has to be displayed, this face, on a more or less horizontal plane. Imagine a man wearing a mask, and imagine that the elastic which holds the mask on has just broken, so that the man (rather than let the mask slip off) has to tilt his head back and balance the mask on his real face. This is the kind of tyranny which Lawson's face exerts over the rest of his body as he cruises along the corridors. Another way of putting it would be to say that Lawson sticks his nose in the air wherever he goes. He doesn't look down his nose at you, he looks *along* his nose.

The best place to examine Lawson's face from is therefore the gallery. What you realise is that there are two kinds of tendon concealed somewhere in the ample neck, and that these tendons, because the head is always tilted backwards, draw the

corners of his mouth downwards. The result of this anatomical peculiarity is that Lawson's face (such is our natural eagerness to find out the mind's construction from the face) gives an inevitable impression of superiority and self-regard. It's the face of somebody who is intensely conscious of the dignity and pomp of the ceremony in which he is taking part. It is not a front bench face. It's very much below the gangway. In a romantic novel or a Hollywood film with historical pretensions, Lawson's face would belong to the man who throws open the double doors, bangs his staff on the floor and announces the arrival of the Duchess. In Beau Brummel's Bath Lawson's face would surmount a natty arrangement of frills and ruffs; there would be a large beauty spot on either cheek; pinches of snuff would regularly make their way up the nostrils; the mouth would be constantly calling on someone to staph Lawson's vitals. □

The above sketch of the Chancellor by James Fenton was first published in the New Statesman on 23 July 1976.

devaluing the pound (*Spectator*, 22 July 1966).

LAWSON'S SEARCH for a parliamentary seat took a long time — so long that he 'lost count' of the number of selection meetings that he attended. In 1968 he finally landed Eton and Slough, a Labour marginal. The 1970 election was a campaign that his opponent, Joan Lestor, remembers without affection:

He is not a racist, but he seemed to have made a calculation that it would be electorally popular to be anti-immigrant and I think that is absolutely despicable. It's bad enough when people use it and believe it, but for a man who had criticised the 1968 East Africa Asians Act, quite rightly, as editor of the *Spectator*, it was quite wrong. Nobody expects to love their opponents, but he was personally unpleasant.

He has denied the charge. Nevertheless the *Slough Observer's* reporter in that campaign, John Jones, recalls: 'What cooked his goose with the Slough electorate was his single-minded determination to make the issue of Commonwealth immigration his main plank. He wanted to stop any coloured immigrants coming to work in already overcrowded urban areas like Slough . . . There were boos, hisses and taunts as he left Slough after the vote was announced' (*Slough Observer*, 1 March).

Whatever the truth, it clearly did not win him many votes. He got a swing of only 1.8 against a national swing of 4.5 per cent and he lost. Then came another search for a seat which took him though Eastbourne, Arundel and Tonbridge to Blaby. At Tonbridge the final shortlist consisted of Nigel Lawson, Leon Brittan (now Home Secretary) and John Stanley (now the Armed Forces minister at the centre of the Belgrano scandal). By a wide majority they chose the obvious candidate — John Stanley.

It is sometimes suggested that both Lawson and Brittan found it more difficult to find Conservative seats because they were Jewish. Lawson's grandfather came to this country from Latvia and Brittan's from Lithuania. One Tory backbencher, asked why Lawson had suddenly discovered a lifelong belief in 'monetarism' so soon after Thatcher's election, remarked cryptically, quoting an old Cole Porter song: 'Well, Lithuanians and Letts do it'.

It seems more plausible that it was Lawson's manner, which appears abrupt and off-hand that delayed his entry into politics. He is no born politician. He does not have the ability to communicate warmth and to show respect that are normally part of every politician's armoury. But he finally overcame these handicaps to win the true-blue Tory seat of Blaby in Leicestershire in February 1974, an ideal seat in every way — except that its name conjures up subliminal images of blabber and blubber every time he is addressed as the Member for Blaby.

In the last year before his election to Parliament, Lawson worked as a special adviser to the Conservative Party and to Edward Heath, virtually writing whole chunks of the February 1974 manifesto. He now insists that he was never a Heathite and disagreed with Heath on many points. He changed his views on economics gradually, he says, from a Keynesian viewpoint when he studied at Oxford, where he won a first in PPE, to the monetarist views he holds today. And he has always been an opponent of incomes policy. 'It's just bitchiness', he says of the people who suggest that he changed his economic views with the change of party leader. Nevertheless he declines to say how he voted in the Conservative leadership election of 1975.

IT IS CERTAINLY true, though, that he rose rapidly under Mrs Thatcher, becoming a front bench Treasury spokesperson in 1977 and Financial Secretary to the Treasury after the election in 1979. There he found an immediate affinity with the civil service because, unlike most politicians, he knew a great deal about his subject, had a clear objective in mind and was able 'to deliver'. He was third in the ministerial pecking order at the Treasury, but he wrote most of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, the basis of the government's economic policies from 1980 onwards.

When he became Secretary of State for Energy in 1981, he had the same effect. 'Suddenly we had a minister with a real sense of direction who could translate fine words into action. You might say anybody would be good after David Howell, but he was uncommonly good at getting things done. Only Tebbit shares that sort of reputation with him', one official

close to him recalled.

'People felt he was an open-minded person who was happy to discuss issues on their own merits, which is surprising when you consider that his popular image is one of heavy dogmatism. But then people would imagine that Peter Walker was a wonderful minister to work for, a sensible, reasonable character, and nothing could be further from the truth.

'They say that if you want to know a minister, ask his private office. David Owen, for example, has been universally loathed by all his private offices, even though he has been admired as an operator. Nigel Lawson, on the other hand, inspired great personal loyalty in his private office. He's the sort of minister they feel committed to.'

Back at the Treasury again as Chancellor, Lawson has won the same kind of loyalty. The mandarins feel that the press is unfair to him. 'The idea that he is doctrinaire is a myth. He'd never be a slave to dogma. He understands it too well. He's got a fine analytical mind and he's confident enough to argue issues out rather than just impose his will.'

The cocky extrovert is also a myth, they say. He is really rather quiet and shy. It's just that he doesn't behave like a typical politician. He doesn't spend a lot of time at parties talking to other politicians and he's very dismissive about the press, so they try to pull him down.

It's a touching picture, but what it really means is that he is not a politician at all. He is a highly effective departmental minister who is very important to Mrs Thatcher. He has taken over from Sir Keith Joseph as the 'keeper of the covenant'. He's not much good with the party, with the press, with parliament or on telly. His speech to the Tory conference last year won the Lead Balloon Award by a short head over Leon Brittan's speech on capital punishment. But never mind.

He understands the party's commitment to 'monetarism' and he believes in it. There are few others in the Cabinet who do both and some who do neither, so Nigel Lawson is essential to the government's credibility. But does he really believe in it? Judging from the last budget he only half believes in it. But he can *pretend* that he fully believes in it and that, at the end of the day, is what matters to the image of a 'resolute' government. □

BUDGET-2

MEDIUM TERM RUBBISH

David Blake analyses the gobbledygook in recent 'Red Books'

NIGEL LAWSON only became Chancellor after the 1983 general election, but he has never concealed his view that most of the intellectual basis for economic policy in the period between 1979 and 1983 came from him.

It certainly carried his by-line. For the otherwise usually invisible post of Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Number 3 in that

Red Book targets for percentage growth in money supply (£M3)

As stated in	80/81	81/82	82/83	83/84	84/85
1980	7-11	6-10	5-9	4-8	—
1981	20*	6-10	5-9	4-8	—
1982	20*	14½*	8-12	7-11	6-10
1983	20*	14½*	10*	7-11	6-10
1984	20*	14½*	10*	9¾*	?

*Denotes actual figure

department) allows its holder to emerge once a year as the author of the main statement of government policy. The Financial Secretary and not the Chancellor signs the *Financial Statement and Budget Report*, the 'Red Book', produced at budget time.

It is here that the celebrated 'Medium Term Financial Strategy' (MTFS) has been printed since 1980 and, as Mr Lawson did indeed write most of the first one, it is perhaps only fair that he should have been given the credit for it. How do that initial document and its successors look now as a guide to the current Chancellor's intellectual framework?

If we are to judge fairly, many of the criticisms often made of the government's record since 1979 have to be put to one side. There is no point in complaining that the government puts too great a weight on inflation and too little on unemployment. The very first words of the first statement of the MTFS were: 'The Government's objectives for the medium-term are to bring down the rate of inflation . . .'

In the 1981 version exactly the same words were used. So if Mr Lawson says in his budget next week that reasserting the fight against inflation is the main purpose of his budget, he will just be sticking to a policy which he has consistently advocated. There have been nuances and swerves; but they have only been in the given reasons why inflation must be cut and the means to be used to cut it.

Take the means first. The initial policy statement was simple and clear. 'To reduce inflation it will progressively reduce the growth of the money stock and will pursue the policies necessary to achieve this aim.' The MTFS intended to get the growth of money supply by 1983-4 down to a rate of about 6 per cent a year.

This policy of controlling the quantity of money (measured by the yardstick known as £M3) was at the core of the strategy, the original MTFS said. Its final sentence spelt this out very clearly — after a discussion on the various ways in which the government might respond if things departed from plan. 'The Government would face a number of options for policy changes in interest rates, taxes and public expenditure. But there would be no question of departing from the money supply policy, which is essential to the success of any anti-inflationary strategy'.

WHAT HAPPENED? Twice in 1980 and again in the Spring of 1981, interest rates were in fact cut although money supply was rising faster than the government's targets. In the 1981 Red Book, Lawson noted that, in the year to mid-February, £M3 had grown by 20 per cent compared with an absolute maximum of 11 per cent set out as the key target the year before.

The key indicator, which in 1980 had been put forward as the certain light which would guide the economy towards stability, was pushed gently to one side. A 'range of indicators' was produced to prove that monetary policy had been 'tight' not loose after all.

This is not just a minor technical point. The supposed revolution in thinking which the first of the MTFS statements was designed to embody was the idea that the *quantity* of money was the only thing that mattered, not other factors such as interest rates. Without the idea of setting money targets, the policy would have simply been old fashioned deflation.

Yet within a year, by 1981, the policy being adopted said that £M3 was not a reliable guide, that high interest rates were a factor that showed that money was tight and that the high exchange rate of the pound was keeping inflation down. In this statement it is possible to see the thinking of Mr (now Sir) Terence Burns, a leading academic economist who had become the government's chief economic adviser.

Mr Burns had put forward a theory of how inflation would come down which was quite different from that espoused by Mr Lawson. Put simply, whereas conventional (Lawson) monetarists said that domestic money growth caused inflation and domestic money control would stop it, the international (Burns) monetarists said that inflation went up and down with the exchange rate. If the pound went up, our imports got cheaper and our manufacturers had to hold down prices to compete.

In 1980, with the pound at temporary record highs throughout the world, that was a much more comforting theory than looking at a domestic indicator, which on the MTFS theory was forecasting that inflation ought to be 20 per cent in 1983. It also turned out to be more accurate, though the costs along the way in terms of lost output and high unemployment were far greater than supporters of the theory had ever admitted possible.

By 1982, although the government continued to say that £M3 was the target on which it ran the economy, most of the previous certainty had gone. This is how the MTFS published at the time of the 1982 Budget summed things up, after saying that in the long run there was still a reasonably stable relationship between money and prices:

In the short run, however, the relationship between any one measure of money and money incomes may be influenced by a range of factors including the behaviour of the exchange rate, the level and structure of interest rates, changes in savings behaviour and the balance between interest rates and fiscal policy, as well as institutional changes.

They forgot to mention the kitchen sink, but managed to get in enough other things to ensure that no one could disagree, even if they could understand.

And contrast the conclusion written at the same time with the certainties of earlier years. The aim was now a 'steady, but not excessive, downward pressure' on money. Monetary 'targets' were even raised in that year. Whereas, in the initial plan, monetary growth was to be down to 6 per cent a year by 1983-4, the new target said somewhere between 7 and 11 per cent. By 1983, the last Budget Red Book which Mr Lawson signed, the line had changed yet again. 'Inflation has fallen fast despite the overrun in previous years monetary targets'.

Why should it matter to show that the first Thatcher government was a great deal less rigid in holding to a particular version of monetarism? One reason is that, as the government itself admitted, the fall in inflation was not caused by the means which it originally chose to bring it about. If Mr Lawson had been right about the relationship between money and inflation, price rises would never have dropped below 10 per cent a year, twice the level they have actually got down to.

And it allows us to be a little bit more sceptical about the credentials of the current Chancellor the next time that he tells us that he, and he alone, understands the workings of the economy well enough to produce reforms that will change everything. □

EDUCATION

FALL-OUT FROM OXFORD

Paul Flather reports on the campaign of disinformation that followed Oxford's refusal to honour Mrs Thatcher

THE DECISION by 738 dons at Oxford University to refuse Mrs Thatcher an honorary degree because of education cuts is still making waves in higher education circles. The most disturbing effect has been a spate of official figures — invariably seized upon by Mrs Thatcher's supporters — which purport to show that spending in Oxford, higher education, and education overall, have all increased in real terms under the Conservative administration.

The figures first surfaced during the Oxford debate itself, in a speech which could best be described as a rousing salute to Mrs Thatcher's policies. Dr Nicholas Shrimpton, an English don at Lady Margaret Hall, announced that spending on higher education had increased by 1 per cent in real terms between 1979/80 and 1984/85. If true, this might indeed make Oxford dons seem 'petty and spiteful' as Lord Quinton, friend of the PM and President of Trinity, dubbed his opponents.

Yet the government's own most recent expenditure White Paper quite clearly said that since 1980 overall funding for universities has been reduced by 8 per cent in real terms (Cmnd

Midland Bank

A year of contrasting performance; good results from Midland's UK and international operations offset by Crocker losses.

Comments by the Chairman, Sir Donald Barron.

Midland Group's results for 1984 were, as previously announced, substantially affected by Crocker's losses. These losses resulted from the writing-off of loans made in earlier years which had deteriorated subsequently, largely because of changed economic conditions in California, and from the creation of additional provisions for possible future loan losses. The performance of the Group other than Crocker was very satisfactory. These operations increased their profit contribution by £115m (48%) and several sectors achieved record results. Strong profits growth was achieved by all the constituents of the Group's UK Business Sector. Growth in costs was well contained throughout the sector and there were further increases in commission and other non-interest income. Samuel Montagu's profits were lower than in 1983 but there was a substantially improved performance by the Group's international businesses, which benefited significantly from the higher earnings of the European subsidiaries and from the elimination of losses in the Group's international trade operations.

Bad debt provisions

Pre-tax profit is struck after making provisions for bad and doubtful debts of £616m compared to £318m last year of which Crocker accounts for £456m against £120m in 1983. The current year's charge includes £471m for specific provisions and £145m for general provisions, compared with £228m and £90m respectively for 1983.

Free capital ratio

Successful group asset and liability management was reflected in an end-year free capital ratio of 4.4% only slightly lower than the figure of 4.6% at the end of 1983. The ratio was significantly affected by the decision of the UK Government in the Finance Act, 1984 to alter the system of tax allowances for fixed asset expenditure. This change necessitated a further provision for deferred taxation and other liabilities which reduced shareholders' funds by £230m; in comparable terms the 1983 ratio would have been 4.1%.

Group strategy

Our Group strategy has as its basis four major objectives:
– To rehabilitate Crocker as rapidly as possible. We believe that our proposal to acquire 100% of the Common Stock and

to bring Crocker within the Midland Group's structure and operations is the best way of achieving this.

- To continue to develop a strong international operation serving our wide range of customers – financial, industrial, commercial, governmental and personal – around the world.
- To continue to have a strong position in the UK banking market, meeting the challenges of marketing and developing new products and services by adapting our traditional skills to the new opportunities presented by technological change.
- To enter with commitment the new capital markets developing as a result of the deregulation of the traditional London securities markets. We will combine the expertise of Midland's treasury and banking operations with the special skills of Samuel Montagu and W. Greenwell & Co, the well known firm of stockbrokers to provide a range of services and products for our national and international markets.

Dividend maintained

The directors have declared an unchanged dividend of 14.5p per share. The total dividends paid for 1984 will amount to 25.5p per share, the same as for 1983. The dividends are covered 1.1 times by earnings.

Outlook

The results of 1984 for the Group other than Crocker give confidence that these operations will continue to contribute substantial profits. With 100% ownership Crocker should also, in due course, make a healthy contribution to Group profits.

Results in brief	1984 £m	1983 £m
Profit before taxation		
Group excluding Crocker	357	242
Crocker	(222)	(17)
Group profit before taxation	135	225
Attributable profit	45	114
Earnings per share	27.1p	60.6p
Dividends per share	25.5p	25.5p
Total assets	£61,483m	£52,613m

*The Report and Accounts for 1984, including the full Statement by the Chairman, Sir Donald Barron, will be available after 2nd April, 1985. Stockholders will receive copies automatically. Others are invited to write to:
The Secretary, Midland Bank plc, Head Office, Poultry, London EC2P 2BX*



Midland Bank Group

9428-II, p 151). It also said that overall education spending over the next three years is expected to decline by 7.7 per cent. Besides, the 'new' figures to which Dr Shrimpton had privileged access so clearly contradicted every shred of documented and personal experience.

This view gained ground as the figures kept reappearing in all the 'right places'. The day after the Oxford vote they appeared in a *Times* leader — written by Ronald Butt — which blamed 'Marxist dons' for 'spearheading' an anti-Thatcher campaign. The next day John Izbicki, education correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph*, based a large news story on the figures.

By Friday *The Times* was carrying a letter from four Oxford dons rebutting the figures, though the letter was mostly surrounded by others critical of the Oxford vote. Then lo and behold, the next day the very same Nicholas Shrimpton was given a column in *The Times* to repeat his arguments. The *Telegraph* was meanwhile snorting at the 'extraordinary intellectual incompetence of the arguments raised in favour of this student demonstration'. The *Financial Times* also joined in with new statistics suggesting there had been few or no cuts under Mrs Thatcher — though its figures only went up to 1982/83.

It is clear that some time before the Oxford result was declared the Tory State machinery had swung into action in preparing these new figures. The key agent was probably Mr Stuart Sexton, adviser to the education secretary, Sir Keith Joseph, drawing on the work of statisticians inside the Department of Education and Science.

By clever use of base years for comparison — in this case 1979/80 which was indeed the year Conservatives came to power — and unadjusted figures it was 'shown' that recurrent university spending had increased from £1,194m to £1,338m over five years. Total education spending was up by £13,613m to £13,753m over the same period, and Oxford's grant from £69m to £71m (all at 1984/85 prices).

Yet a few years ago those same DES officials admitted that some 60,000 18-year olds who would normally have gained a higher education place were not going to because of cuts. The reality was less dire, because applications to polytechnics and colleges shot up to compensate in part for the shortfall in university places. In 1982/83 for instance, there was a 6.5 per cent increase in intake over the previous year. At the same time the college lecturers' union, NATFHE, estimates that the costs per student have shrunk by 20 per cent since 1980 in real terms. As overall student numbers in polytechnics and colleges are up by some 30 per cent since 1980 this simply means that the impact of the cuts has been moderated by increasing the workload of lecturers at polys and colleges.

In contrast, the Universities Central Council for Admissions, which deals only with university applications, has estimated that the proportion of successful candidates has fallen from 50 per cent in 1981/82 to 44.3 per cent in 1983/84. The Association of University Teachers says 11,500, or one in six, academics have lost their jobs in the 1980s, including 4,000 forced into early retirement. The universities have lost 25,000 potential students and more than 1,000 courses. The union says

salaries have fallen by 20 per cent in purchasing terms in five years.

THE RECORD is being set straight after assiduous efforts by Oxford dons like Jim Reed, a German tutor at St John's whose personal experience just did not square with spending 'increases'. But not before the *Times Higher Education Supplement* called the episode a 'calculated campaign of disinformation'. A recent *THES* survey revealed that more than 50 per cent of academics think cuts in research and teaching are 'serious' with another 25 to 30 per cent believing that they have had 'some effect.' As Denis Noble, professor of cardiovascular physiology, said 'if it's a choice between believing the accountant and the shop floor about cuts, whom would you believe?'

Comparisons with 1979/80 produce distorted results for two reasons. First, education spending was low that year, while by 1980/81 it had jumped up thanks to the huge salary hike produced by the Clegg pay study. This added some 15 per cent to the University pay bill. Second, the new figures include, without saying so, £100m given for redundancy and restructuring, and they do not account for adjustments for changed tuition fees.

A Parliamentary answer from Sir Keith Joseph (*Hansard* 11 February) made the position clear. After adjustments, university spending had gone up by no more than £16m in five years. Even then, this did not take account of abnormal increases in, say, the price of books. Comparisons with 1980/81 can be defended because market pay anomalies — which surely the Tories disapprove of — had been removed and because Conservative policy only began to bite from that year.

Meanwhile, the Oxford dons continue their search for the source of the new figures. 'There are so many sets of statistics floating around it does look like the work of a Ministry of Disinformation' says Professor Peter Pulzer of All Souls. One mystery is that official DES figures use a 1983/84 price base yet the new figures use a 1984/85 base.

A DES spokesperson this week strongly denied the figures had been 'cooked' though he admitted there was room for 'some degree of debate'. A whole host of other factors — absorption, the way EC students are classified — were said to have affected the figures as well. Even so they were reproduced in an official briefing document — the sort left at Westminster for MPs (Tories) to pad out their weekend constituency speeches.

The document, *Education and the Oxford University Vote*, contains ten points, and not surprisingly the statistics are selected to suggest that education is alive and well in Mrs Thatcher's hands. It reaffirms education spending up by 1 per cent, numbers down by 12 per cent. Pupil teacher ratios have improved in schools, not surprisingly given falling roles. Teachers have secured a modest real improvement in their salaries, a claim hotly disputed by the National Union of Teachers currently engaged in a pay dispute.

Next the science budget 'about which the Oxford Congregation (the senate) particularly complained', as the document puts it, has increased in real terms by 6 per cent under the Tories from £340m to £550m, with an extra £45m promised. To many leading scientists,

like Professor Noble, a world leader in his field, this is simply the government masquerading behind the figures while all around jobs and programmes are axed.

According to a private paper prepared for a top level ad hoc group on research funding, including Professor Noble, set up in 1984 to monitor cuts, the buying power of the science budget has in fact fallen by 5.7 per cent in real terms from a peak in 1980. This was at the very time when vital new scientific opportunities were opening up in biotechnology, materials science, satellite remote sensing, and computer research.

This fits the known picture, which has the Medical Research Council starting a new category of 'approved but not funded' projects, standing at 22 at the last count. Last year only 53 per cent of 'alpha-rated' MRC work, or its priority projects, could be backed, down from 83 per cent on the previous year. The Agricultural and Food Research Council faces a £6m bill for 'managing cuts', the Natural Environment Research Council one of £3.1m for the same purpose — the costs of closing down work.

ALL THIS has of course been made plain to the government numerous times before the exasperated, traditionally conservative, scientists closed down their laboratories and turned out in force to snub the Prime Minister in Oxford. Sir David Phillips who chairs the research councils' co-ordinating board, gave due warning to the Commons Select Committee last November. A recent report from the Science Policy Research Unit at Sussex University again shows how UK science is falling behind, with an estimated 10 per cent drop in national scientific performance between 1973 and 1983.

This is not the first time the education lobby has had to deal with this kind of cutspeak. Most significantly in a long debate that climaxed last year over student demand, DES statisticians argued that as the 18-year old population was set to decline through the 1980s and 1990s by up to 14 per cent, cuts in higher education were fully merited.

A determined campaign involving the AUT, the vice-chancellors' committee, and the Royal Society of Statisticians was mounted to show that increased demand — particularly from women — would mean little or no fall through to the 1990s. Since the 1960s the number of girls getting two or more A levels has risen from 63 to 90 per cent of the boys' equivalent — and is still rising in line with international trends. At a London lecture last October Professor T.M.F. Smith, a statistician from Southampton University, bluntly called for 'proper academic debate' and 'open, informed, discussion' of statistical assumptions used by the officials in future.

The lesson is clearly that lies and statistics do matter. So many key issues now turn on statistical presentation — most notably of course the great 'uneconomic pits' debate, but also the cost of unemployment, of abolishing the Greater London Council, or pursuing Trident. The role of academics able to beat off the State is clearly going to become more and more important as statistics are to be used to obscure real experience. It is a task that cannot be shirked. □

TACKLING THEM HEAD ON

Apart from the miners' strike and its aftermath, the major controversies at Labour's Scottish conference were about the illegal tactics being adopted in council spending battles and the role of Militant in the Young Socialists. Rob Edwards reports.

One of the more heated arguments at the Labour Party's Scottish Conference in Perth last weekend took place when the city hall was virtually deserted for lunch on Saturday.

Two left-wing members of the Scottish executive, Mike Connarty and Mark Lazarowicz, had buttonholed journalists from the *Glasgow Herald* and the *Scotsman*, to complain about their coverage of Friday's local government debate. They argued fiercely that both newspapers had misrepresented conference decisions by reporting that law breaking by councils fighting spending cuts had been rejected and that the shadow Scottish Secretary, Donald Dewar MP, who does not condone illegality, had been let off the hook.

The row — which surfaced again right at the end of the conference — reflects the acute sensitivity of Labour's local government politics in Scotland at the moment. A few days before the conference began, Edinburgh and Stirling district councils had both agreed on 'technically' illegal budgets and are now gearing up for the crucial stages of their battle with the Scottish Office. Lazarowicz, an Edinburgh district councillor and chairperson of the Scottish executive's local government committee, and Connarty, leader of Stirling council, were both very anxious that conference should be seen to support their councils. It was thus particularly galling to read in the press that the opposite had occurred.

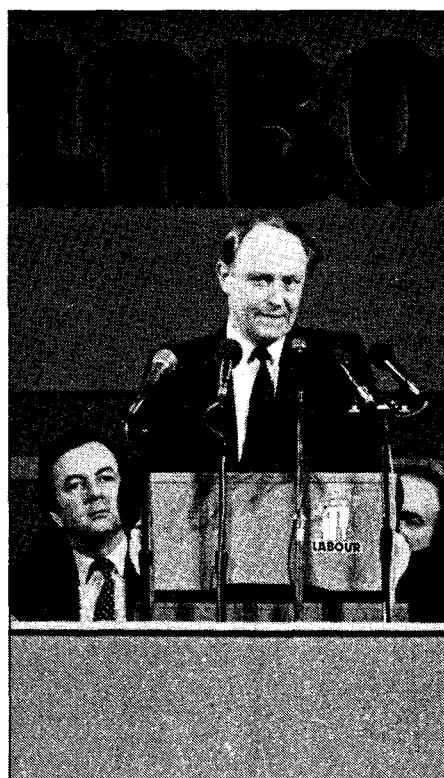
Their annoyance was understandable. What in fact had happened was that a motion pledging 'full support for any council forced to break the law' had been rejected by delegates on a show of hands after the movers, Rutherglen Labour Party, had refused to accede to the executive's request for remission. But the problem with the motion was not its endorsement of illegality, but its opposition to rates increases. The press — misled, in Connarty's view, by right-wing members of the executive — did not understand the code. The motion (which also praised Liverpool City Council's 'unequivocal stance in defence of the working class') was defeated because it expressed the policy of the Militant Tendency.

Another composite motion, promising to mobilise support for councils forced into 'technical illegality', was overwhelmingly passed. And Donald Dewar was emphatically not allowed off the hook by Lazarowicz, who concluded his speech on behalf of the executive

by specifically urging him to give his support to Edinburgh and Stirling — something that Dewar conspicuously failed to do in his speech to conference later.

This kind of opacity would not have helped delegates or the public to understand the awkward realities of the battle between central and local government in Scotland (See *New Statesman* 2 November 1984). Edinburgh, as Labour Group leader Alex Wood told one fringe meeting, is aiming to delay the final confrontation over its housing budget until July, by which time he argues it might be possible to organise more widespread resistance, since other Labour-controlled councils are likely to be facing a general rate support grant 'clawback'. Edinburgh's labour councillors are pinning much hope on their legal action, which challenges the validity of the Scottish Office's limit on their housing spending and is due in court next week.

The problem is that there is likely to be just as much disagreement over tactics in July as there



Neil Kinnock faces the music in Perth

is now. Wood was scathing in his criticisms of councils like Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen which, unlike Edinburgh and Stirling, have refused to spend more than the legal limit from rates on housing. If Edinburgh and Stirling succeed in extending the confrontation, but fail to win any concessions, they could be forced to increase rents by more than they would have needed to do at the start of the year. Even they do not see completely eye to eye, with Stirling planning to obey the inevitable court order to cut its budget and most Edinburgh Labour councillors seriously contemplating contempt of court.

THE TYPE of Labour party code that frequently baffles first-time delegates and the media was at its most bizarre during the other issue of major internal controversy at the conference: the dominant role of Militant in the

party's youth section, the Young Socialists (YS). A composite motion from Scottish Labour Students critical of the 'grip of sectarian politics on the YS' provoked a bitter row outside the conference hall, with Militant supporters vigorously petitioning delegates to oppose an imagined 'witchhunt' and publicly branding its backers as scabs.

But when the controversy burst onto the conference floor on Sunday, no one referred directly to Militant, preferring euphemisms like 'the existing YS organisation'. When one Militant delegate complained that, compared to Sweden's 100 Socialist youth organisers, 'we've got only one', delegates broke into disbelieving laughter. (He meant 'we' to refer to the YS, but delegates interpreted it as referring to the Militant Tendency.) In spite of its coyness, the debate did mark a new willingness by the Left in Scotland to take on Militant by political argument in preference to the Right's tactic of expulsion. Backed by the executive, the motion was overwhelmingly passed — much to the obvious annoyance of the dozen or so Militant delegates who promptly left the hall.

Other debates reflected the fact that the Scottish party has now got the bit between its teeth on party organisation. The conference was united in condemning the failure of the National Executive Committee to reform party organisation by shifting resources from policing the constitution to publicity and campaigning. It expressed concern about the duplication of research staff in Parliament and in the Party's research and international departments and urged a review of existing campaigning methods. For the Scottish executive, Bill Gilby warned party staff at both the Scottish and British headquarters (Kier Hardie House in Glasgow and Walworth Road in London) that they would have to be prepared to adopt new and more effective styles of working.

The newly elected Scottish executive is little changed, with the Left still very much in control. There were two fierce behind-the-scenes battles with different results. In the first, left-winger Sandy Smeaton from the engineering union's white collar section (AUEW(TASS)) failed yet again to win a place in the trade union section, largely because of the refusal of his union's industrial sections to vote for him. In the second, Kilmarnock's John Knapp survived an intensely personalised attempt by his local women's section to get him voted off.

Easily the two most unpopular party members at the conference were Strathclyde education convenor Malcolm Green (who, as Scottish local authority representative on the Manpower Services Commission, had agreed to the closure of 29 MSC skill centres in Britain), and Clydeside trade union leader turned journalist Jimmy Reid (whose vitriolic attacks on the miners' leadership during the strike will not easily be forgiven). There was only one occasion when the Scottish executive failed to get its way — on the vital issue of conference seating arrangements. The controversial suggestion that, from next year, tables should no longer be provided for delegates was overwhelmingly rejected. Why? Because delegates insisted on their need for somewhere to put their bottles of iron brew, Scotland's very own hangover cure. □

Glasgow Herald

MULTICULTURAL ROW COMES TO A HEAD

Barry Hugill reports on the moves by Bradford parents to get the school they want

THIS FRIDAY Bradford's schools sub-committee will be meeting to discuss the future of Ray Honeyford, the head of Drummond Middle School. The school caters for 530 9-13 year olds, 85 per cent of whom are Asian. Mr Honeyford, in two articles in an obscure right-wing journal, the *Salisbury Review*, has argued that in schools like his own white pupils form a 'new ethnic minority' whose education is damaged by the presence of many pupils not using English as their first language.

Initially upset, latterly incensed, over 200 parents with children at Drummond wrote to the education director, Richard Knight, threatening to remove their children from the school unless Honeyford was removed. They were backed by Labour councillors on the education committee but Tory and Alliance votes ensured that no action was taken until after an inspection of the school by a team of school inspectors.

The inspectors went and inspected and Mr Honeyford agreed not to write any more articles without first obtaining permission from senior education department officials. In January, the *Salisbury Review* published another article by Honeyford in which he made clear his disapproval of multi-culturalism in education. It is, he wrote, inspired by Marxism.

Once more parents demanded the council take action. After all, they said, Bradford has a reputation in education circles as a pioneer of multi-culturalism. Back in 1982 all headteachers were sent details of the council's determination 'to seek ways of preparing all children and the young for life in multi-cultural society' and to 'counter racism and racist attitudes and inequalities and discriminations which arises from them'. Mr Honeyford, argued the parents, clearly disagrees with this policy and cannot be trusted to carry out the instructions of the council. The conflict was thus not just about race and multi-culturalism, it was about the powers of the council, as the duly elected authority, against the normally unchallenged absolute authority of the school head.

Honeyford's second article was seen as further evidence of his professional misconduct. No action was taken, however, after he explained that he had written and submitted it before giving the undertaking not to criticise the council in print.

MEANWHILE, the inspectors reported. They found no evidence that white pupils at Drummond were underachieving. They discovered that Asian languages were ignored despite the official council policy that 'schools



Bradford's 'alternative' school at lunch: a taste of the protest yet to come

should build on and develop the strengths of cultural and linguistic diversity'. As for the policy that schools should 'respond sensitively to the special needs of minority groups' and 'have a sensitive and sympathetic understanding of cultural and religious issues', they observed that Honeyford strongly disapproved of Asian pupils taking extended visits to the Indian sub-continent during term time for family occasions. But good teachers, said the inspectors, should be able to make use of such visits in their classroom teaching. Rather than being disruptive to learning, they could be enriching for both the pupils concerned and for their classmates.

It is not in the nature of LEA inspectors to be blunt. The report's conclusion that Honeyford's management 'raises serious questions as to whether the school can function effectively unless the head can regain the trust and confidence of a significant proportion of parents', is as near as any official report will get to calling for a head's dismissal.

The council decided to fudge. Despite the allegation of Labour councillor Mohammed Ajeeb that Honeyford has on more than one occasion described Asian children as 'less intelligent, irresponsible and idiots' and the evidence of their own inspectors that he was ignoring the council's policies, they decided to give him time to put things right.

And so it is that on Friday the schools sub-committee will be meeting. Many of the parents fear that Honeyford will again be let off the hook and in order to show that they are far from satisfied at his progress last week they organised their own 'alternative school'.

Housed in the Pakistan community centre the school catered for nearly 300 of Drummond's pupils. Staffed by volunteer teachers, some of

whom risked their own jobs by taking time off from their own schools, and the parents themselves, it was intended as an example of what a genuine community school should be like. Pupils were offered the standard middle-school curriculum plus classes in Urdu and Arabic and lessons on Afro-Caribbean history and geography. On the day that I visited the pupils were clearly happy, in good spirits and well behaved.

It is far from clear how the council will deal with this latest demonstration of parental feeling. The Conservative education committee chairperson Eric Pickles has condemned the parents saying that what is needed is a reconciliation between the school and the community. A spokesperson for the parents, Jenny Woodward, agrees. Give us a head who will abide by the council's multi-racial education guidelines and there will be reconciliation, she says. Although the alternative school was only for a week, she has made it clear that if Honeyford is not removed further protest action will take place.

Many council officials are known to have little time for Honeyford. The Chief Executive, Gordon Moor, has made it public that he (Honeyford) was offered £100,000 to go but refused. The Director of Social Services, John Crook, has attacked Honeyford in the local press. Richard Knight, the education chief, and Eric Pickles have been silent.

PICKLES FINDS himself in a difficult political situation. His own record on race matters is good and the local Conservative Party has consistently supported the multi-cultural education policy. Nevertheless there is a strong faction within the Party which fully supports Honeyford. He also has the backing of his

Larne Fehintola

union, the National Association of Head Teachers whose general secretary, David Hart, has spoken out on his behalf on several occasions. Nationally, the *Salisbury Review* is the house journal of the Tory new right, one of whose best known figures, Roger Scruton, has sprung to Honeyford's defence.

The influential local paper, the *Yorkshire Post*, has editorialised for Honeyford as have the *Daily Telegraph* and *Daily Mail*. According to them he is facing victimisation because of his refusal to have anything to do with 'trendy' multi-cultural nonsense. Pickles has made two trips to London to discuss the matter with Sir Keith Joseph and it would be surprising if he were advised by the Minister to adopt a tough policy towards the head.

Jenny Woodward believes that the Tory and Alliance councillors lack political courage. They are frightened of a 'backlash' if Honeyford is sacked and fear that their much vaunted multi-cultural policies would come under sustained attack, though if Tories and Alliance stuck firm such opposition would have no reputable political leadership. Last year a supply teacher at a nearby school was sacked after alleging that some of the staff had made racist remarks about the black headteacher.

Why, the parents have asked, could he be got rid of so quickly when, at the same time, council officials make statements about how difficult it is to sack a head.

Supporters of Honeyford are adamant that he should not be penalised for his *views*. He is not guilty of any misconduct they say. They are, however, wrong. On 28 January the second in command in the education department, Norman Roper, passed on an instruction to him that all children should be allowed to wear track suits for PE lessons. This is now a common practice in most schools and is a sensible way of avoiding the discomfort and embarrassment of many pubescent girls, especially Muslims, at wearing gym knickers. Honeyford has ignored that instruction and insists that the girls wear traditional PE kit. That is a clear instance of professional misconduct.

The Drummond parents have made it clear that they do not want a separate Muslim school for their children. The fear of Jenny Woodward and of Tim Whitfield, the city's Community Relations Officer, is that if the council next Friday refuses to sack Honeyford then the Islamic fundamentalists who have long argued for separate schools could find they have some fresh supporters. □

CONSERVATIVE PARTY

THATCHERISM IS BEGINNING TO CRACK

A series of violent encounters — from the Falklands war through the IRA bomb to the miners' strike — has allowed Mrs Thatcher to personify Conservative strengths in the face of attack. Now her critics are looking behind the public face at the impact of her policies — and, argues George Tremlett, preparing to rebel

MORE AND MORE Conservatives are beginning to quietly question Mrs Thatcher's style of leadership, and the effect this is having upon Britain's political system. As yet this does not amount to an attempt to replace her, but there is a growing unhappiness within the Party and her authority is clearly weakening.

It is now widely realised (although not publicly acknowledged) that the next few weeks could determine her future. The scenario runs like this:

Nigel Lawson will present his Budget on 19 March. Unless there is a clear departure from the fiscal policy of recent years Francis Pym, Edward Heath, Ian Gilmour and Jim Prior may all condemn the Budget thus leading a major revolt against the central economic theme of Thatcherism.

Then, with the Bill to abolish the GLC having finished its course through standing committee, the stage is set for a second Parliamentary revolt at report stage and third reading. *Both are due later this month*. As many as forty or fifty Members, possibly more, may either vote against the Bill, abstain or just stay away.

And then thirdly, possibly on 16 April (the

day presently pencilled in the Lords diary), the House of Lords may vote on the main principle of an elected authority for London before moving on to committee stage (where some peers are already planning to wreck the Government's legislative time-table if the main vote fails).

Whichever route is taken, Mrs Thatcher and her government are in deep trouble. It seems possible that Labour, Liberal, SDP and crossbench peers may largely vote together with the judges and the bishops on the clear constitutional principle that the government has failed to win the approval of the nation for its Bill to dismantle elected city-wide government in London.

The issue is as clear as that, and therein lies the danger for the government. Already, it is being said that the government has a fall-back position; namely to announce an Inquiry, possibly a Royal Commission, into London's government. But then there would have to be GLC elections. These could coincide with next year's London Borough elections. Think of the dangers in that!

Alternatively, the government might win its crucial vote in the Lords — and be seen on

television throughout the nation using the hereditary peers to deny Londoners their vote. Think of the dangers in that!

It's a no-win situation.

Against the background of all that, the Budget, the collapse of the £, the Ponting case and the use of MI5 for party political purposes, the government could soon find itself faced with a major crisis of confidence within the Conservative Party.

EVEN WITHOUT all this, many Conservatives now doubt the sense of Mrs Thatcher's central strategy and it is now an open secret that many of the 'natural' Conservatives in the Establishment — church, civil servants, not to mention the Royal Family — have been expressing their unhappiness about Mrs Thatcher's divisive behaviour.

Much of this stems from her belief that the Conservative Party could destroy Labour as a party of government and that this would lead to a realignment with the Liberal/SDP Alliance becoming her main opposition. But the miners' strike allowed Mrs Thatcher to ignore the underlying common feeling in the labour movement and these anxieties are now bringing the labour movement back together again.

My concern is that the bitter divisions that Mrs Thatcher has caused throughout our society by declaring war upon the unions and upon local government and by using the unemployed as a tool of economic policy are both alien to the Conservative tradition and are now dangerously close to causing social conflict and civil disorder. No Prime Minister should believe that a realignment can be achieved through means such as this.

The reality is that Mrs Thatcher's leadership has been under threat for the past 18 months. Do not suspect for one moment that she is unaware of this.

Why else do you think that she is for ever talking unnecessarily of Cabinet reshuffles that are far off, of election campaigns that are two or maybe three years away, of leading her own Party into that next election, or of bringing back Cecil Parkinson or putting Norman Tebbit in charge of the Party machine?

Why else do you think Mrs Thatcher has been striding the world stage in recent months as leaders do when they are in trouble at home?

The lady feels vulnerable. It shows and she has cause to be because it is not only the 'Wets' but a growing number of moderates from many different sections of her Party who now question the whole ethos of 'Thatcherism' as an ideology which sits rather uncomfortably upon a Party that has always tended to pride itself on its ability to eschew ideology.

It has been the miners' strike that has kept those divisions concealed. On the many occasions that I have been among groups of Conservatives discussing the leadership, the conversation stopper has always been: 'But we can do nothing about that until the miners' strike is over . . .'

EVEN WHILE that tragic dispute rumbled on there was a growing feeling throughout last summer that the leadership was losing direction. This was expected to come to a head at the Party conference in Brighton. It nearly did.

The IRA bombing of the Grand Hotel has

overshadowed all else that happened during those days by the Sussex coast. But let me tell you what I think *nearly* happened (and I may be in some position to know because I was there).

Throughout the previous 12 months there had been growing anxiety over the government's handling of local government and unemployment, though there was a feeling that 'something had to be done about Arthur Scargill' even among those who doubted the wisdom of the government's central strategy; it mounted during the summer months, and by the time the delegates assembled there was a distinct feeling of unease in the air.

Ken Livingstone and I went down to Brighton to address a fringe meeting in defence of the GLC. It was a stormy meeting with 600 delegates packing the room (Livingstone still says it was the roughest audience he has ever seen). But that is not the point of the story. This hall contained a broad cross-section of the Conservative Party. Every seat was taken with Ministers standing at the back (and Patrick Jenkin outside with his ear to the key-hole anxious not to be seen), and although the skinhead fringe of the Monday Club tried to rough me up the audience listened to and some even applauded my attack upon the government's approach to local government and unemployment. After the meeting a number of delegates including MPs urged me not to give up my campaign.

The following morning, within the conference hall itself, two delegates went to the rostrum to do something almost unheard of at Conservative conferences. They criticised the government. They, too, were applauded. This clearly worried the conference organisers. Party Chairman John Selwyn Gummer went to Mrs Thatcher and suggested that she re-write parts of her speech to show that the government really did care about unemployment. They had just finished working together on that speech in Mrs Thatcher's suite at the Grand Hotel when the IRA bomb exploded with its tragic and terrible consequences of death and injury.

But what would have happened if the bomb had not gone off? Can there be any doubt that Mrs Thatcher knew that she was facing the most difficult Conservative speech of her leadership and was more than a little concerned at the unrest within her Party?

Well, we all know what happened — and now we are back where we were before the Brighton bomb. Opinion against the Prime Minister has hardened again, and any thoughts of her

courage on that occasion are now as much a memory as the Falklands war.

After all, there is a difference between the heroism that can earn a Victoria Cross and that much quieter moral courage that leads people to lay down their lives in defence of values. One can have too much of the former and never enough of the latter! — But does Mrs Thatcher know the difference?

Therein, I suspect, lies her deepest problem. She has that kind of battle courage which we all admire, but now she is up against something else — people throughout the labour movement, down the mines, on the railways, in the classrooms, in local government and, yes, throughout her own Party who also feel deeply themselves about the communities in which they live and the institutions which they serve.

They, too, have a courage. They will not be broken any more than the main mass of the NUM was broken. Forced to choose between the two forms of heroism, the traditional Conservative always prefers moral courage. He instinctively recoils against the kind of politics now being practised by Mrs Thatcher and her government; he loathes division or outward show of aggression, and while he may be fully prepared to fight if he has to he would prefer not to talk too much about it — and he just does not believe there are 'enemies within'!

These are the men now determined to see Mrs Thatcher OUT. She makes them feel uncomfortable when she talks about capital punishment with a glint in her eye; she makes them recoil when adopting a militaristic stance because they know that war is about life and death in defence of something else, and she makes them feel sick in the very bottom of their stomach when she appears indifferent to the unemployment because they know that unemployment means you cannot keep body and soul together and you lose your dignity as a human being.

They are the very bedrock of the Conservative Party, and like the bedrock of the labour movement they are slow to stir; but now they are stirring just as the labour movement has been stirred by the *issues* raised by the miners' strike, even if it has been unhappy about some aspects of the strike.

I suspect Mrs Thatcher just does not understand the forces now mobilising against her. □

George Tremlett is a GLC Councillor, who was expelled from the Conservative Group last year.

RACISM

WHEN UNDERDOG BITES UNDERDOG

Michael Coren on relations between Black and Jewish groups

WHEN JESSE JACKSON made his widely reported comments about 'Hymies' and spoke of New York, one of the few cities where the Democrats received a vote worthy of mention, as 'Hymietown' a new low in Black/Jewish relations was reached.

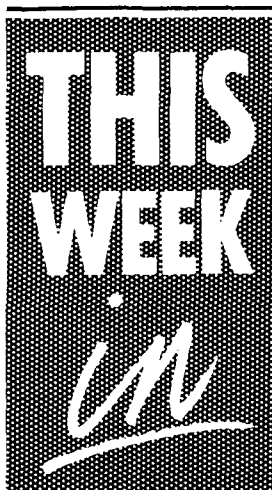
Black and Jewish leaders in Britain rather smugly ignored the American experience, taking comfort in the fact that here there is no neanderthal Jewish Defence League and only a small Black Moslem community. 'Ethnic' groups are not only smaller here; they play a far less dominant role in British politics.

To a large extent those leaders are correct. But the seeds of a problem do exist, and no number of heads buried in the sand will ease matters. GLC leader Ken Livingstone both annoyed and delighted British Jews, depending on their political allegiances, recently when he accused the Jewish establishment of 'near-Fascism' and highlighted a growing reaction on the part of many British Jews. Guyanan barrister Rudy Narayan wrote in 1977 in his book *Black Britain*: 'The Jews own most of Britain . . . But the Jews have not stopped in business. They have learnt only too well from Adolph Hitler. There are two other areas where their infiltration has been secret and overwhelming. The Jews have learnt about the power of the printed word. Control over the media including publishing, newspapers and broadcasting is absolute.'

According to one high ranking member of The Board of Deputies of British Jews: 'We would have taken the thing to the Department of Public Prosecutions, but that would have only made matters much worse.'

Narayan's rantings, filling some half a dozen pages, are certainly not typical though anti-semites can disguise their racism under the political principle of anti-Zionism. It is quite common to hear Jews refer to West Indians as 'schwartzes', literally 'blacks' but colloquially 'niggers'. Ignorant abuse is not however the crux of a problem which is becoming more and more apparent. Rastafarianism, followed strictly by relatively few but influential on many, fundamentally questions the integrity and history of the Jewish people. Black Moslems have never disguised their hostility.

Jewish feelings towards Blacks differ widely; Jews in Britain tend to vote and feel as a class as much as a race. And to expect, or demand, a more liberal stance from Jews because they themselves have been victims is almost obscene. Where the Jewish/Black relationship differs from that between the White Anglo-Saxon and the West Indian is that Jews are often only one scale up on the immigrant pecking order. Thus areas of Hackney and the East-End, now inhabited by Blacks, were until recently Jewish ghettos. A white racist with a beard and a large



The turning tide of public opinion

The polls show that social justice is finally back on the political agenda

The magic rites of rock n' roll

Anthropologically Dave Barry is heir apparent to Siberian mystics

The angst of the eighties

How fear of failure has a crippling effect on the young

Plus: Sasha Moorsom on the first gay city

NEWSOCIETY

black hat is much easier to remember than a racist who looks like anyone else.

Novelist James Baldwin wrote of the American Black experience: 'When we were growing up in Harlem our demoralising series of landlords were Jewish, and we hated them.' In 1985 Hackney, the Berger empire of slum housing is owned by orthodox Jews. A readiness to identify Jews as a privileged caucus within the ruling class has been fed by the Home Office's collusion with anti-Black racism under a Jewish Home Secretary. David Rosenberg, co-ordinator of A Jewish Cultural And Anti-Racist Project, funded by the GLC and at the forefront of the campaign to improve the dialogue with the Black community, has witnessed subsequent difficulties. 'I've been at meetings where young West Indians have said 'Brittan is a Jew, Brittan is a racist.' They're wrong, but they take some convincing.' The antipathy goes further. Attacks on Jews by Blacks and violence between members of both groups have been recorded. Neither race is anxious to publicise this.

Rosenberg's enlightened attitude is not shared by many inside the Jewish establishment. After Rosenberg's organisation received a GLC grant, Dr Jacob Gewirtz of the Board of Deputies stated that it was: 'A slap in the face to the Jewish community... I can think of no other group describing itself as Jewish which is so unrepresentative of the Jewish community and so undeserving of public funding.' The older generation of Jewish activists who are currently in leading positions are far from militant in either exposing friction between Jews and Blacks, or coming out strongly against anti-Black prejudice. Instead of an ethos of solidarity, there is a feeling of 'we went through it without any help from the State or the judiciary; and while the Blacks are disliked, we're ignored.' The traditional East-End Jewish socialist and communist is in danger of becoming more myth than matter, although in a move to give a louder voice to Jewish racism the Jewish Socialist Group is next month launching a new magazine, *Jewish Socialist*.

The frailty of the Jewish socialist voice is not just a question of the disappearance of a cohesive Jewish working-class community. Jewish socialists have been increasingly alienated from today's Left alliances because of the State of Israel and the position of Zionism. Since the foundation of the State and certainly since 1967, Jews have found themselves virtually for the first time identified as *political* oppressors. The feminist papers, *Outwrite* and *Spare Rib*, have clearly asserted a feminist/anti-Zionist alliance. Politicised Blacks generally identify with the Palestinians, a coloured minority group persecuted by a white, American-backed regime. Israel's ever closer links with South Africa serves to confirm these feelings.

In the United States the result of a generation of rising antagonism has been physical, verbal and political conflict, with liberals on all sides being squeezed out in an economic depression. Britain shares most of those problems, but has size and time on its side. Rosenberg again: 'Both communities are changing, and they know it. The extremists and the racists are in the minority at present, that's got to be the most powerful they ever are.' □



Baby stuff goes out with nasty bathwater

Mandy Merck

SO DID a porn video warp the mind of the Bedfordshire Fox? At the end of Malcolm Fairley's trial the papers were full of rape, *Sex Wish* and Tory MP Jill Knight, who was certain she could see the connections: 'It is horrendous that a film like this is so easily available... if just one person goes out and imitates it in the way The Fox has, then that is reason enough for action.'

The 27 February *Standard* cited an unnamed officer from Scotland Yard saying 'We are sure he tried to reconstruct the incidents he had seen in *Sex Wish* in real life.' (The unnamed police source, as Oxford Poly researcher Brian Brown points out in *The Video Nasties**, is a staple element in reports which attempt to link videos with violence.)

Given the copious reporting of Mr Justice Caulfield's remarks during sentencing — 'You are a decadent advertisement for evil pornographers... one of their worst casualties' — readers might have assumed that Caulfield had accepted QC Michael Connell's copy-cat theory as evidence of diminished responsibility. Not so: Fairley received six terms of life imprisonment, but the video nasty defence is still at liberty.

Much of the responsibility for this can be laid at the doors of Fleet Street, who've historically played the media corruption angle for everything it's worth. Remember the tabloids' favourite rape case in 1983, when Mark Austin's solicitor claimed that the defendant's 'moral values were obliterated by seeing women degraded in video films'? The defence argued that these (only *I Spit on Your Grave* was mentioned by name) had convinced Austin that women wanted to be raped.

This would be an unusual reading of the named film, first titled *Day of the Woman*, since it devotes much of its narrative to the sympathetic heroine's bloody revenge on her attackers. (The *Sun* duly reported that Austin's viewing 'usually included violent rape scenes which ended with the victims enjoying the assault'.)

NEEDLESS TO SAY, the refutation of such claims is not nearly so newsworthy. Thus you may have missed a rather less insistent item on the Fairley case in the 3 March *Sunday Times*. This featured the Bedfordshire CID's view that Fairley has never seen *Sex Wish*, only wore its villain's mask as a burglar's precaution against recognition, and hadn't even mentioned videos until well into police questioning.

That rare animal, a named police source called Detective Chief Superintendent Brian Prickett, put Fairley's attacks down to 'a number of factors' (among them, perhaps, his

illiteracy, innumeracy and impaired speech?). Prickett did mention pornographic films (unnamed), although Fairley reportedly told detectives that he'd been watching them for years before he began to rape in the course of his burglaries.

The *Sex Wish* story emerged at a propitious time for supporters of the Video Recording Act. Their key evidence for the Act's extensive powers, the *Video Violence and Children* report, has now been widely questioned. *Video Violence* claimed that 45 per cent of British schoolkids had seen at least one 'nasty'.

Its critics argue that the survey's list of titles included several passed for exhibition by the British Board of Film Censors (such as the spoof-horror pic *The Evil Dead*); that children ticked fictitious titles in comparison checks; and that when respondents worked from memory in a subsequent survey, only 18 out of 500 remembered seeing any of the original list of violent titles.

SUCH FINDINGS have neither received the original report's headline coverage nor impeded the progress of the 1984 Act. But the Act's implementation has been delayed by the death of Lord Harlech, President of the British Board of Film Censors. At present, the BBFC is a trade advisory body without legal powers. Under the Video Recordings Act, it will continue as an industrial censor for cinema while becoming a State censor for video.

This is just one of many anomalies in a piece of legislation which Labour Peer Douglas Houghton recently called 'as near a shambles as I've met'. In addition to fines of up to £20,000 and extensive powers of search and seizure, the Act's broad and contradictory powers may result, for instance, in sex education videos being classified '18' or confined to porn shops because they 'encourage' 'human sexual activity' or 'depict' 'human genital organs'.

All this may seem a rather curious way to deal with the questionable relation of videos and violence. As Lord Swinfen, a supporter of the original legislation, admitted to a meeting of concerned educationalists and civil liberties groups last month, his intentions were to restrict horror movies — 'so horrific they would not have been granted a certificate'. Instead, an estimated 7000 titles of all descriptions now await the scrutiny of 17 new staff at the British Board of Film Censors, the ink fresh on their copies of the Official Secrets Act. Not least because Fleet Street got its sex wish.

Mandy Merck is the editor of the film and television magazine *Screen*

The Areopagitica Educational Trust, 2 Plender Court, Plender Street, London NW1, will be monitoring the implementation of the Video Recordings Act.

*Edited by Martin Barker, *Pluto*.

DIARY

Readers! I want to ask you to do something really important. New Zealand's decision to refuse to let US ships visit its harbours if they carry nuclear weapons is the tiniest possible *unilateral* reversal of US nuclear hegemony imaginable by an ally. For the Americans it is the very tip of the thin edge of the wedge. They will do everything to reverse it. Not by an open declaration to crush the islands but by slow economic squeeze, covert political payoffs, and campaigns of cultural terrorism. The US Chiefs of Staff want those nukes back there by about 1990. Nothing dramatic, so as not to arouse the opposition. Rather the steady push on all fronts — sanctions especially — to get Lange out of office. In days gone by there would have been a big campaign, probably with a speech by Michael Foot in Trafalgar Square, in support of plucky New Zealand. Forget it. The other side are the rich ones, so let's not make a lot of noise to discharge our sense of self-righteousness, with little effect. Instead, just quietly, steadily and constantly buy New Zealand products and only New Zealand products when you can, and persuade your friends to do the same.

When Michael Bettaney was sentenced, I revealed the existence of AIMLESS-MI5 — The *Anglo-Irish Marxist Leninist Socialist Sect*, run by MI5 — the best paid group of revos in the land. Some of its members are doubtless some of my best friends. But I was mortified at the news about Harry Newton being among its most active cadre. I'd never even met him. Nor did he ever seek me out as a 'crypto'. This is a grave blow to my credentials. I feel quite ashamed. Could it be that they are *not* tapping my telephone? The possibility makes me feel quite paranoid. I must get more active. I think I'll join up someone to END.

But then AIMLESS-MI5 is only one of a number of full-time paid groups on the Left. The British State may not regard CND as officially subversive but it is certainly seen as such in Washington. Cathy Massiter's whistle-blowing has demonstrated the perpetual unreliability of UK personnel in these matters. So the US will have its own double-agents and taps. These will be spied upon in turn by MI5. I can imagine a sub-committee meeting of four efficient comrades: one from AIMLESS-MI5; one from AIMLESS-CIA; another from AIMLESS-KGB; and finally one from Bettaney's breakaway sect ULTRA-AIMLESS. . . Naturally, they will be arguing about procedure. The room is bugged by AIMLESS-CIA and their bug is bugged in turn by AIMLESS-MI5 while AIMLESS-KGB's equipment has broken down. . .

How can the Left advance under such conditions? Cathy Massiter provides one part of the answer, it seemed to me, watching her on the famous programme. She appeared perfectly middle-of-the-road, level-headed and good humoured. And for nearly three years she was paid full-time to monitor CND, to become thereby the best read person in its literature in the country. Thus she will have taken on board the full weight of the arguments. Furthermore, she will have considered carefully the personalities in CND — Bruce Kent, Joan Ruddock, John Cox, Mary Kaldor, Edward Thompson and the many others like them. It is clear that they are genuine. Just compare them, for a moment, to any five members of the Cabinet. There is no contest in terms of humanity, principle, intelligence: personal qualities in the CND leaders related to the general validity of their arguments. So how could Massiter do her job and not become sympathetic? Especially when the case against nuclear disarmament rarely avoids the appearance of being espoused by externally manipulated agitators.

I'm annoyed with Bea Campbell. Or rather, with her article on the miners in last week's *NS*. It's true that many on the Left talked about the ballot in closet whispers — like homosexuality

ROGER WODDIS

The Man from Stavropol

'Draw your own conclusions.' — Mikhail Gorbachev to an American history student he met at the British Museum.

What is he like, this new chap?
Do you really want to know?
Well, Maggie confessed she liked him,
Which only goes to show.

I talked to him last December,
When we met for a minute or two;
I took his hat and overcoat,
And pointed out the loo.

So you see I talk as an expert,
Who's studied his working life;
He's bright and warm and friendly,
And so is his elegant wife.

I wouldn't say he's a Liberal
In the manner of David Steel;
He puts you in mind of Rod Steiger,
And he's almost as nice as Neil.

He knows quite a bit about farming,
And he took a degree in law;
He's twenty years younger than Reagan,
Though not so quick on the draw.

I've taken a look at the tea-leaves
And consulted my crystal ball;
And between you and me and the Kremlin,
I admit that I know fuck all.



Robin Whelan

before 1968. But not all of us. At any rate, I didn't. I think that I was the first in the *New Statesman* to say there should be one, and I went on about it here and elsewhere when it mattered, during the strike. This was not a right-wing argument, nor did it express any lack of solidarity: it was about winning. Yet now, and paradoxically for the first time, I hesitate when asked the question: 'Would it have been better if they had balloted in April, lost by one per cent and there'd never been a strike at all?' Then, when I hear people say that 1926 wasn't such a defeat because it led to a Labour government in 1929. . . well, thanks and no thanks. I prefer a sunny sky to silver linings. I'm told, however, that readers need a silver lining at this moment. So this is it: there will be no amnesty and with a levy of sacked miners the constituency Labour parties may never be the same again. Do you recall the 33-year-old militant who was fired back in 1976, just as MacGregor's getting rid of the ring-leaders now? Later he climbed back over the gates. His name, Lech Walesa.

Another bright spot is the inevitable demise of Margaret 'I was on holiday' Thatcher. There is a special tradition of such remarks that go back to Chamberlain after Munich. I think that Labour should immediately issue the famous picture of the dole queue Saatchi and Saatchi used in 1979, with the slogan 'Labour isn't working' replaced by 'I was on holiday at the time'. Let the phrase haunt her as we have been haunted by so many others over the years, while our leaders try to flannel their way out of reality. Indeed, they'd make a good speech. . . here it is:

I have here a piece of paper. It means peace for our time, I've not become Prime Minister to oversee the disappearance of the British Empire. For, you see, we are the masters now. At any rate, the man in Whitehall knows best. And I insist that this is not a war, it is only an armed conflict. Furthermore, you've never had it so good. The pound in your pocket is not devalued. Prices will go down at a stroke. Crisis, what crisis? I was on holiday at the time.

Islander

JUMPING A GENERATION

Professor Stephen Cohen looks at the record of Gorbachev's predecessors as General Secretary and the growing constraints on any Soviet leader's freedom of action



All photos: Camera Press

(L to r) Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko, Gorbachev: the General Secretary has become a mediator not a policy maker

A FUNDAMENTAL question about the nature of the Soviet political system has been overlooked in media hullabaloo surrounding the death of Konstantin Chernenko, and the political character of his successor Mikhail Gorbachev. Does it really matter so much who the individual is who takes over?

As in other political systems, the personality and views of a Soviet leader have at times profoundly affected the use of power. Stalin's psychological needs, as his biographer Robert C. Tucker has shown, were a driving force behind the extraordinary policies of the Soviet 1930s, from collectivisation of the peasantry to the great terror of 1936-39. And Nikita Khrushchev's self-image as a benevolent reformer played an essential role in his unexpected de-Stalinisation policies of 1956-64. Therefore, it is historically incorrect to say, as some Western commentators do, that 'all Soviet leaders are alike'.

But the Soviet Union is no longer the leader-dominated political system that many observers still imagine it to be. Indeed, the steady erosion of its top executive office, the General Secretaryship of the Communist Party, may be unique among large nations. Since Stalin's death in 1953, each Soviet leader has had less personal power to make domestic and foreign policy than did his predecessor. The question is whether this remarkable trend is a kind of law of

diminishing general secretaries that reflects deep structural changes in the Soviet system, or whether it is merely the result of a coincidental succession of aged and ailing leaders, and thus likely to be reversed by a younger, more vigorous successor.

In fact, there is no single or fixed pattern of supreme leadership in the Soviet Union, which has had only six leaders since 1917 — three of them since 1982. Each led the country in a different manner. As the founding father, Lenin's personal authority was unrivalled among his illustrious colleagues, even though he held no special post in the party and made decisions collectively with them in leadership councils where raucous disagreements over policy were often the norm.

Stalin's long rule transformed the nature of Soviet leadership in two important ways. In the 1920s, he emerged as Lenin's successor largely by using the bureaucratic powers of appointment inherent in his position as General Secretary, thereby making it the top post for future successions as well. But in the 1930s, he became a capricious and unchallengeable tyrant, over the party and the country, on the basis of police terror. Nominally, other high officials sat with Stalin on the Politburo and the Central Committee, but they did so at his pleasure and often perished on his whim. They were, as Khrushchev later remarked,

'temporary people'.

MORE THAN any other factor, that traumatic experience shaped the nature of post-Stalin leadership. Fearing the advent of another despot above them, Soviet elites have imposed constraints on every subsequent leader. Despite his activist role, Khrushchev was always challengeable on matters of power and policy, as dramatised by his abrupt overthrow by the Central Committee in 1964. Alarmed by his own increasingly arbitrary behaviour, that representative assembly of ranking elites even resolved that no future General Secretary should also be head of the government bureaucracy, or Premier, as Khrushchev had been. As a result, Leonid Brezhnev was without a formal state title until he finally acquired the honorific Presidency in 1977.

Constraints on the General Secretary, even in the area of appointments, grew into a tacit system of checks and balances during Brezhnev's 18-year reign. A *de facto* sharing of power evolved among high-level party and state officials, only a few of whom actually sat on the Politburo. Brezhnev's conservative policies both reflected and nurtured the new leadership system by virtually guaranteeing lifetime tenure to such officials, by respecting the prerogatives of their fiefdoms, and by not imposing significant policy changes on them.

Once power has been so diffused in a political system, it is hard to retrieve. It may be especially difficult in the Soviet system, where elites have learned to thwart reforms from above and where a new General Secretary has always needed at least five years, more than an American presidential term, just to consolidate his authority as leader. Yuri Andropov, who succeeded Brezhnev in 1982, was too old and ill to accomplish that feat, and so was Chernenko.

Nor is there clear evidence that the Soviet elite now yearns for a strong leader, as the Western press has asserted. Such reports mistake grassroots nostalgia for Stalin, the 'strong boss', for the opinion of decision-makers. They also assume that Andropov, a former KGB chief, was chosen to be a 'strongman' ruler. But it may well be that the Central Committee, which selects the General Secretary, knew about Andropov's kidney disease and thus had no illusions about his prospects. Above all, there is the telling fact that the Soviet elite has tolerated and chosen aged, enfeebled leaders ever since Brezhnev became seriously infirm in the late 1970s.

A revitalization of the top leadership position is still possible in the Soviet Union given the youth and comparative vigour of the new leader, particularly if linked to growing sentiments favouring economic reform. The decision-making process remains highly centralised and the power of the party Secretariat, however diminished, still exceeds that of any other institution. And as Andropov's 'anti-corruption' campaign showed, a General Secretary can devise new ways to extend his authority to the bureaucratic territory of recalcitrant officials. Gorbachev will at least expect to be around for long enough to try.

But unless a strong political coalition for reform stands behind the new General Secretary, he will end up, as did his recent predecessors, being a mediator of conflicting interests rather than a maker of policy. He will reign rather than rule. The fact that it is Gorbachev who will occupy the office of General Secretary is now less important than the forces which have put him there. □

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GREECE

END OF AN ERA

Yiannis Roubatis reports on the background to PASOK's decision to dump President Karamanlis

Athens

CONTRARY TO THE REPUTATION that the Anglo-Saxon press has created for Greece's ruling Socialist party, it has produced few political surprises in the last two years. The Papandreou government signed a new agreement with the United States to cover the extensive American military facilities on Greek soil. It ushered through parliament laws that restricted the right of trade unionists to strike and followed a fairly conservative economic and incomes policy.

Indeed Greece's larger Communist Party has come to call the policies of the socialist government the 'Triangular Compromise'. This referred to the Socialists' supposed tacit alliance with conservative President Konstantine Karamanlis and with the main opposition party, the 'New Democracy Party', which he had founded.

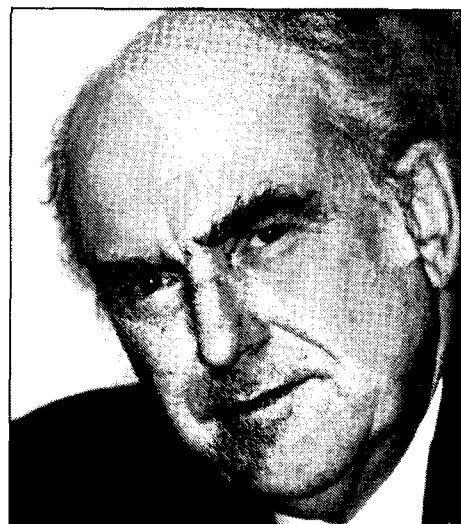
Well, all that is no more. Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou's bold chess move against Karamanlis effectively put an end to the President's 50-year political career. The decision by Papandreou and his PASOK (Panhellenic Socialist Movement) central committee not to support Mr Karamanlis for re-election to a second term as President reversed what seemed to most to be an irreversible decision. To make matters worse for Karamanlis, PASOK also announced that it would back Mr Christos Sartzetakis, a Supreme Court judge, as the next Head of State and would seek to change the constitution to curtail the President's powers.

The choice of Mr Sartzetakis epitomises the Socialists' change of heart about Karamanlis. Papandreou himself described him as 'a symbol of the struggle for democracy and freedom'. Sartzetakis was the young magistrate in the northern city of Thessaloniki who in 1963 headed the investigation into the murder of Gregory Lambrakis, a left-wing MP. The murder was the work of right-wing extremists, who had acted with the knowledge and encouragement of the police. The prime minister at the time was Karamanlis.

The case inspired the prize winning film *Z*. During the Colonels' dictatorship Sartzetakis was dismissed from the judiciary and jailed. So Karamanlis, the major conservative politician of the last three decades, a man who had become the symbol of the Right in Greece, was confronted with an unpretty part of his political past. Apparently that was too much for him. Karamanlis had come to be regarded and regard himself as a statesman. Last Sunday, when he resigned as President of the Greek Republic, he wrote to the President of Parliament, Mr Yiannis Alevras, who according to the constitution will be acting president, that he was resigning 'in view of the developments outlined that I cannot co-operate in'.

At the same time, however, officials close to Karamanlis went to great lengths to explain to reporters — especially foreign reporters — that the resignation was in protest against the 'perilous new course' that the Socialists were now going to follow. This was a reference to the decision to submit to parliament plans for constitutional reform, including the curtailment of the powers of the President.

Karamanlis's decision to resign was not surprising. In 1963, having lost an election which brought to power the Centre Union Party of Georgios Papandreou, the present premier's father, Karamanlis abandoned his party and went into self-imposed exile in Paris. He remained there until after the withering away of the Greek dictatorship following the



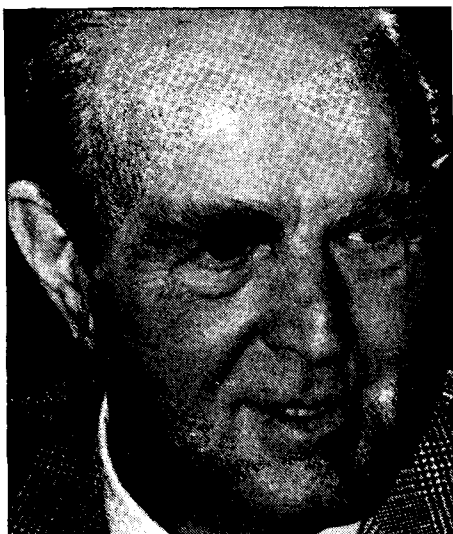
Camera Press

Papandreou: in the end to switched against

Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974. Now he has again chose to abandon a nation that was not 'grateful enough' to re-elect him as president.

Whatever conservatives in Greece and their friends abroad may claim, Karamanlis established the rules of the political game in Greece. He played it and won most of the time. But when he was beaten at his own game by Papandreou, like a child he decided that he 'did not want to play any more'. It seems that, for the Right in Greece, democratic procedures are to be followed so long as they help them remain in power. When the same procedures lead to their demise, they somehow are not 'democratic' anymore.

THE QUESTION, of course, remains: what happened to make Andreas Papandreou change his mind about Mr Karamanlis's re-election? The full details of what transpired in the two or three days immediately preceding the PASOK announcement are not yet known. But it seems that in the last few days before the meeting it became obvious to Papandreou that PASOK



Camera Press

Karamanlis — for once he's lost the game whose rules he made

would pay a heavy price in the voting booths, if it backed Karamanlis.

Although Karamanlis has been careful not to create public problems for Mr Papandreou, both the left and the centre of Papandreou's party were strongly against Karamanlis. There is evidence that PASOK's headquarters in Athens, its senior party officials and many of its MP's received protests from rank-and-file party members about Karamanlis. The message was clear: if the party backs Karamanlis, many members will find it hard to be active in the coming general elections in May.

Initially Papandreou seems not to have taken very seriously this swelling party reaction against Karamanlis. When he did so, he acted to pre-empt those who for the first time were perhaps ready to challenge him directly in a central committee meeting: he led the move against Karamanlis himself.

Papandreou was also under heavy criticism from Greece's communist parties. His move to pre-empt his own party's 'rebels' also pre-empted the Communist Left. By taking away from them most of their arguments against him — and there are many — he once again forced them to enter the next elections on his own terms. He has in effect forced them to co-operate with him on the issue of the 'election of a truly democratic president'.

This fact has not been lost on the Communists. But there is little they can do about it. If they do not now back Papandreou's candidate for president, they will be accused by most people on the Left of dealing a blow to the leftist cause.

There are however other reasons for Papandreou's decision to bring Mr Karamanlis's political career to an end. One of them has to do with Karamanlis's domineering presence in Greece's political life. It seems that Papandreou had reached the conclusion that during a second — and last — term in office Karamanlis would have been less hesitant about adopting a more publicly activist presidential posture. He would by then have nothing to lose. So in essence Papandreou got Karamanlis before Karamanlis could get him.

Will the gamble pay off? It will all depend on a number of factors, chief among them Papandreou himself. To elect Sartzetakis as President PASOK needs 200 votes out of the 300 in the Greek parliament. It does not have

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them. But that two thirds rule only applies in the first and second round of voting. In a third and final round all that would be needed is 180 votes. PASOK has 165 votes and the Communists 12. There are also four independent MPs who would be persuaded to vote in favour of PASOK's candidate. If Sartzetakis is elected president, PASOK can breathe a collective sigh of relief. For unless they lose their nerve, it would be hard for them to lose the coming general election.

This brings us back to the Right and their traditional and ever present allies, the Americans. The Reagan Administration is clearly fuming about Papandreou's decision to abandon Karamanlis. The careful policy of political 'consensus' that the American Ambassador in Athens, Mr Monteagle Stearns, has nurtured over the last three years seems to

have fallen apart. But times have changed and the 'tried solutions' of the past — namely direct American political intervention in Greece — are not so easy any more. Some people in Washington, against the advice of the American embassy in Athens, seem to be talking with some nostalgia about a more 'activist policy' in Greece.

Time will show what the gods and Mr Reagan have in mind for Greece. There is little doubt, however, that a lot will have to change for the Americans to be able to do anything to help their Greek friends. Of course, if Papandreou fails to elect Sartzetakis, things become much more difficult for everybody — but most of all for the Communist Left, which will once again have become embroiled in a political fight which it did not chose, but from which it could not walk away. □

DETENTE

ACROSS THE DIVIDE

Jane Dibblin reports on important shifts in relations between groups in East and West Europe working for peace

TO COINCIDE with the reopening of the Geneva talks, two peace appeals have been published which represent remarkable shifts in attitudes amongst Eastern European activists.

One is from Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia. This 'Prague Appeal' is being acknowledged by Western sources close to Chartists as particularly significant in both content and signatories. For the first time since the establishment of Charter in 1977 a document of wider political focus than human rights has been endorsed by the whole range of Chartists; Czechs and Slovaks, Catholics and Protestants, Socialists and anti-Socialists. The signatories include figures well known in the West, like Vaclav Havel, former foreign minister Professor Jiri Hajek and Jaroslav Sabata.

The appeal, published in Britain by Palach Press, has also been made available to groups in East Germany, Poland and Hungary. Chartists hoped that they would release their own appeals taking up some of the major points in it. However, it seems highly likely that East Germans, at least, will add their signatures to the same appeal. This is surprising, as one of the central issues discussed in it — and one that Chartists have not taken up publicly before — is the sensitive topic of the division of Germany (see excerpts below).

The other interesting shift is less explicit. Groups in Eastern Europe have traditionally been wary of endorsing unilateral disarmament by the West as some fear this would increase Soviet power in their own countries. For the first time, this document carefully avoids disassociating itself from unilateralism. While this doesn't mean all signatories are now in favour, it means they are willing to look for a common framework with Western peace movements which would tolerate each side suggesting different initiatives. The appeal will be presented to the next European Nuclear

Disarmament Convention in Amsterdam in July.

ANOTHER APPEAL was published last week by women from all five 'deployment countries' (those which have already received the new US and Soviet missiles — the UK, East and West Germany, Italy and Czechoslovakia) which argues that only by destroying the 'enemy' image can the circle of violence be broken. It also couples peace and human rights.

It marks a new phase in the attempts to create détente from below, as it's a joint statement from East and West which is specifically by women and which takes up the issues of violence against women and gender roles and links them to peace and nuclear weapons.

Women in the GDR and Czechoslovakia, with their legally 'guaranteed' equality have been suspicious of the feminism of many Western peace women. However, in the GDR, at least, women have in the past two to three years been working in women's groups and tackling subjects which would be considered by most Western women as part of a feminist agenda.

Extract from the Prague Appeal

IN OUR PURSUIT of these aims we can no longer avoid those issues that have so far been taboo, one of which is the division of Germany.

If our aim is European unification, then no one can be denied the right to self-determination; and this applies equally to the Germans. As with the other rights, though, this must not be enforced at the expense of other peoples, nor by way of ignoring their fears. Let us therefore declare unequivocally,

that no solution shall be sought through a further revision of European frontiers. In the process of European rapprochement, frontiers should gradually lose much of their significance, but even this should not be regarded as an opportunity for the revival of nationalistic backsliding. While appreciating this fact, let us acknowledge openly the right of the Germans freely to decide on if or how they wish to unite their two states within their present frontiers. Following Bonn's agreements with its Eastern neighbours and the Helsinki Accords, the signing of a peace treaty with Germany could become one of the most important levers for a positive transformation of Europe.

Another taboo subject has been the withdrawal of foreign troops. Let us therefore propose that the NATO and the Warsaw Pact enter forthwith into negotiations on the dissolution of their military organisations, on the removal of all nuclear weapons either sited in or aimed at Europe, and on the withdrawal of US and Soviet troops from the territories of their European allies. Part of such an agreement should be the scaling down of armed forces in all countries of the European continent to a level eliminating the risk of aggression from any quarter.

These and other aims should be part and parcel of an interlocking process serving the ideal of mutual rapprochement and therefore offering no possible threat to any party. We do not seek to turn Europe into a third superpower, but instead to overcome the superpower bloc structure by way of an alliance of free and independent nations within a democratic and self-governing all-European community living in friendship with nations of the entire world. The freedom and dignity of individual citizens are the key to the freedom and self-determination of nations. And only sovereign nations can transform Europe into a community of equal partners which would not pose the threat of a global nuclear war, but instead serve as an example of real peaceful coexistence.

Perhaps this ideal sounds like a dream. However, we are convinced that it expresses the desire of a majority of Europeans. It is therefore an ideal worth striving for; all the more so, in view of the fact that today's world will hardly surmount its crisis unless Europe also takes the path its citizens desire. □

This England

E3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

□ Bank's & Hansons, the Black Country brewery group, has banned watching of the television soap operas 'Dallas', 'Coronation Street', 'Crossroads' and 'Dynasty' in its public houses. A spokesman for the group, which managed 400 pubs, said television was killing the art of conversation and the pub atmosphere. Customers will still be allowed to watch sport. — *Daily Telegraph* (G. M. Moger)

□ The Queen is setting an example to Britain's workers by accepting a pay rise below the rate of inflation. For the second year running she is to get an increase of just 4 per cent in her allowance from the Civil List. That will boost her 'earnings' from the state to £4 million-plus from the present £3,850,000. — *Sun* (Daniel McQueen)

LETTERS

Clayton Square, Liverpool

Florence Gersten, *Save Our City Campaign, Liverpool*

The Save Our City Campaign wishes to express publicly its outrage at a recent attack on our democratic system.

During April and May 1984, a public inquiry was held, at the direction of the Department of the Environment, into the proposal to replace Liverpool's 230-year-old Clayton Square area by a massive precinct. Thanks to the depredations of the war and of 1960s planning, no other comparable area now exists in the centre of this city. The developer of the proposed shopping precinct, Wimpey Property Holdings Ltd, was backed by successive city councils. Liverpool's councils have a long record of supporting demolition in preference to conservation and renovation. The Wimpey proposals were opposed by a large number of Liverpool residents. During the inquiry, evidence presented by or for the Save Our City Campaign figured very largely.

The result of the inquiry, which lasted for over a week, was announced on 21 February, almost ten months after its conclusion. The Inspector appointed by the Department of the Environment to preside over the inquiry recommended absolutely without qualification that the Clayton Square area should not be demolished and that the Wimpey plan should not proceed. *This recommendation was completely disregarded by Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for the Environment*, who has decreed that the shopping precinct should be built.

What was the use of setting up a public inquiry if its conclusions were to be totally disregarded? What was the use of appointing advisers if their advice was to be ignored? How much public money was spent on carrying out this useless exercise? We had believed, until now, that the institution of public inquiries was a genuine method of enabling the voice of the people to be heard when public issues were considered. Perhaps this was formerly the case. Under the present regime, however, we now know that the entire

process is a futile charade.

We will always remember Mr Jenkin in Liverpool. His name will be commemorated by the absence of streets and buildings of great charm and character, bearing witness to more than two centuries of our city's history.

The serious soul of SF

Allan T. Sutherland, *London SW9*

Roger Lewis's baffling attack on science fiction (NS 1 March) does not so much prompt the question whether Mr Lewis has ever read any good science fiction as lead one to wonder whether he has ever read any science fiction at all. The examples of fantasy, whimsy and trite allegory that he does quote may be justifiable enough targets for attack, but they are not science fiction, and form no basis at all for dismissing the genre out of hand.

Thus, 'From the Hobbits to the Watership bunnies to the wizened foetus of ET, science fiction tries its best to incarnate sentimental deities'. This is rather like condemning epic poetry from Patience Strong to Pam Ayres, or tragic drama from Brian Rix to 'No Sex, Please, We're British' — utterly incomprehensible. After all, it's not as if there were any shortage of bad SF on which to base a critical hatchet-job.

If Mr Lewis were to bring himself to read, say, Ursula Le Guin's *The Dispossessed*, Philip K. Dick's *A Scanner Darkly* or any of J. G. Ballard's major SF works, he would find no 'folksy gods', 'sentimental deities' or 'winsome and coddish theology'. But he might start to realise that those of us who take science fiction seriously do so in part because there are certain social, psychological and political realities that it is uniquely well-equipped to handle.

It is particularly unfortunate that the NS should publish such an uninformed and ill-considered attack at a time when there is a lot going on in British SF that would be of interest to many readers. The Women's Press are about to launch their list of feminist SF; in April Dent publish the first anthology of stories from 'Interzone' magazine. In at least one of the latter — Geoff

Ryman's extraordinary 'O Happy Day!' — I think Mr Lewis will discover the 'sense of a soul' that he finds so lacking in his mainstream reading.

Ashton's pension

David Ross, *London SE5*

May I add to your report: (NS 8 March)

1. Ashton is paying enhanced contributions of £60 a week (15 per cent of salary) into the pension fund and the employer's extra payment is designed to match it. The sum is not a gift to Ashton but capital to provide a pension; the capital, of course, remains in the fund.

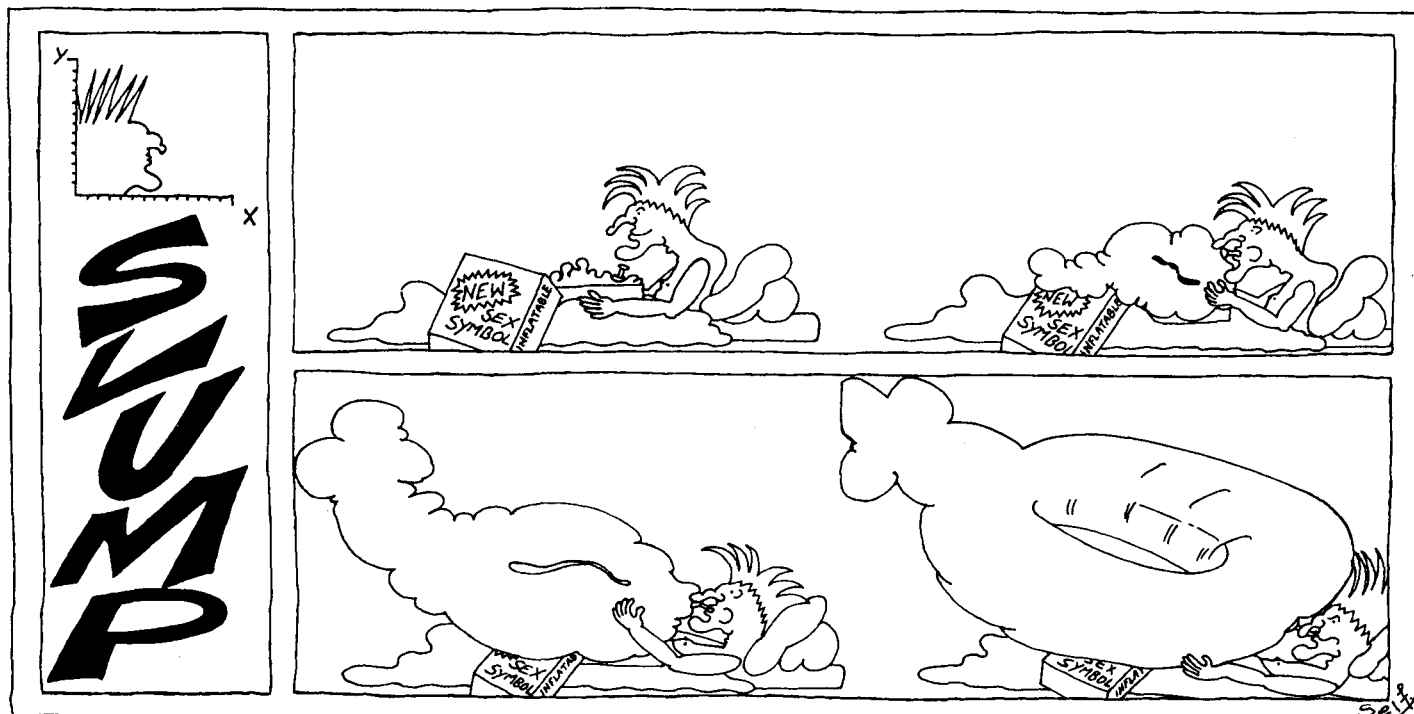
2. Ashton was suspended because, while General Secretary of a union demanding an Official Information Act, he made an attributable statement to *The Times*. The report by Mr Aidan White has been covertly distributed to publications by, it is believed, someone who wants to see Mr Ecclestone as Mr Ashton's successor. There has been no protest or inquiry about this.

This shows the atmosphere at NUJ headquarters and explains why many of us believe that the union itself cannot conduct an impartial inquiry into the case. We want an outside body, such as the TUC, to take it over. It is not right to dismiss us as 'rightwingers and the authoritarian Left'. Ashton's supporters include rank and file who do not want to see our union taken over by the Journalists' Charter, the Special Branch and other disruptives.

Strange politics

Z. A. Herdman, *Newcastle upon Tyne*

Re Jayne Egerton's letter (NS 1 March) on Jeff Weeks's article. It is only when *feminist* ideas appear to coincide with those of the Right that left-wing males use this to discredit the side they might otherwise be expected to back. Politics is riddled with strange coincidences: the far Right's position on American nuclear missiles, as represented by



people such as Enoch Powell, has much in common with CND: read any tirade against 'trendy middle-class Left' causes such as Gay Liberation, and you can't be sure whether it has been written by Peter Simple or a member of the 'fundamentalist' Left. Why do men such as Weeks never use *these* coincidences to discredit CND or the Left?

One suspects that left-wing males are happy to jump on the apparent similarity between feminist and right-wing thinking on pornography as an 'ideologically respectable' way of debasing the feminist position. The fact is that pornography, as Rosalind Coward states, 'is a display of images which confirm men's sense of having power over women' and left-wing men have as much of a vested interest in defending it as any others. Wouldn't it be nice if just for once these men could be *honest* and admit that they like pornography, or question how far they can ever be objective about it, instead of this endless pseudo-noble pretence that they want to protect 'sexual freedom' from a load of nasty repressive right-wing feminists?

Leukaemia rates near Sellafield

James Cutler, Producer/Documentaries, Yorkshire Television

Dr Gardner's explanations (Letters 8 March) are far from satisfactory. Erythroleukaemia is extremely rare, on average only three deaths occur annually in the under-25 age group in the whole of England and Wales, and it has been shown to be caused by radiation in animal studies. So, Gardner's failure to mention such a rare case of radiation-linked malignancy in the area under closest scrutiny — whatever its classification in the past — is unorthodox to say the least and, as I said in my article, all the more surprising since I sent him a copy of the death certificate in this particular case.

As for his comments on Millom R.D.'s cancer rate, I am pleased to see that he now acknowledges that Millom's rate is 20 per cent greater than Depwade's — a piece of evidence that was unacceptably missing from the Black Report.

However, Dr Gardner makes no attempt to explain the six other cases omitted from the Black Report. In a recent letter to the *Lancet*, Dr Craft has now admitted the errors in his study for the Black Report, and re-drawn the cancer map of Cumbria. He now accepts that four of the 'top ten' electoral wards with the most significant childhood cancer rates in the Northern Region are on the Cumbrian coast in areas polluted by Windscale's discharges. Yet the Black Report used Craft's earlier study to justify the statement 'when the wards with the highest rates were plotted on a map, no geographical pattern emerged'. This statement is clearly incorrect.

Perhaps Dr Gardner and his colleagues on the Black Advisory Group should now re-write the Black Report and correct the omissions and distortions in the original.

Arts and the disabled

Joan Greening & Janet Bliss, Co-Directors, Strathcona Theatre Company

Naseem Khan's article on Art and Disability (NS 1 March) is merely an eloquent apologia for the status quo; an elitist situation in which handicapped people are deemed to be artists only if they transcend some mystical line between art and therapy.

We infer from the article that the productions of Strathcona Theatre Company, comprising young mentally handicapped adults, have no relevance

FEEDBACK

AIDS — apocalyptic metaphor

VIRUSES do not have a meaning, but under certain circumstances they may be invested with one. 'Any important disease whose causality is murky, and for which treatment is ineffectual, tends to be awash in significance', remarks Susan Sontag in a crucial essay on *Illness as Metaphor* (Penguin 1978, p. 62). AIDS is now 'significant' in this sense: it has become the basis for an authoritarian metaphor about the dangers of dissent. The AIDS metaphor, like the metaphor of cancer, is, in Sontag's phrase, 'implicitly genocidal' (*ibid*, p.86): it prescribes 'radical' treatment. For the Nazis, Jewry was the cancer of Europe. For the British '80s, male homosexuality is the death of heterosexuals.

The AIDS metaphor has developed in stages, the first of which effects an identification of gayness with the disease. This identification is culturally feasible because we already have a contagion theory of *desire*: gay men 'recruit' young straight men, and young straight men can be recruited, because homosexuality is itself conceived of as a virus that can be transmitted. Everything follows from this: it was the imputed involvement of the 'innocent young' which allowed the mere death of the Anglican chaplain Gregory Richards to become irresistibly charismatic. In the usual run of things, we only ever hear about young offenders as anti-social malingers who deserve a short sharp shock, and we will never hear of them in any other way again. The script gave them no more than a walk-on or, perhaps, a walk-off part: the role of 'threat-to-the-whole-community' which, in the '70s, they would have played themselves, as 'muggers', had been re-cast.

If AIDS is in some sense continuous with homosexuality, then it follows that the condition is a punishment for aberrant pleasure. Those photographs of the 'faces of death' in the *News of the World* showed us that gay men bear at last the outward and visible signs of their spiritual corruption: like the heroine's smallpox in Zola's *Nana* ('Venus was decomposing'), the disease reveals the truth about the sexual criminal. It is also the ultimate deterrent. On 21 February, the *Express* quoted an American physician as saying 'To young gays and to prostitutes the stark message is: sexually, this is the wrong time to experiment'. Well, isn't it always? While it is perfectly possible for gay men to enjoy sex in perfect safety (prostitutes, I imagine, will continue to go in fear of heterosexual psychopaths), the message of the AIDS scare is — if you do it, you'll die. AIDS is a capital punishment imposed by Nature for the breaking of bourgeois law. Only a culture which no longer feels that it can naturalise its traditional values convincingly could use the idea of Nature in that way, and if AIDS reporting set out, with malice aforethought, to find a scapegoat, it has also had some of the functions of a public execution.

One of the functions of the 'gay plague', as of many disease metaphors, is to mystify — and thus to regulate and re-channel — real fears: in this case, about 'the end of the world'. Little

effort is required in 1985 to cultivate the sense that we may all be dead tomorrow, and it has been so easy to define gay men (about whom everyone feels anxious anyway) as harbingers of universal death because universal death is actually what people are afraid of. The 'gay plague' is a container for nuclear anxiety, which is diffused and depoliticised through the work of metaphor and displaced on to a pariah. The quite exceptionally dangerous potential of the AIDS metaphor derives from this fact. The consequences for those of us who had to shoulder *that* kind of burden do not bear imagination.

Once established as a metaphor a disease can become 'adjectival'. Thus on 22 February the *Daily Mail* Mahood cartoon showed two men with attaché cases going through a door marked TUC, one of them saying to the other: 'Scargillism is much worse — at least an AIDS patient can be committed to hospital for treatment'. It is significant, of course, that this joke is a joke: there is as yet no audience to which its content could be expounded 'seriously'. It must be read, however, in terms of a fundamental change in the function of disease metaphors in political discourse which Sontag traces to 'the conservative response to the French revolution', whereby disease (civil disorder), once imagined as curable, comes to be perceived, in Burke's phrase, as 'an attack on the fountain of life itself' (*ibid*, p.86). This new meaning was systematically articulated by fascism. No doubt John Junor, Peregrine Worsthorne and the odd bilious cleric will continue to suggest that AIDS is the 'wrath of God', but in a culture which is only nominally Christian this claim can scarcely generate much imaginative energy. The wrath of God, in any case, is visited on the wicked, and the point of the AIDS metaphor is the infection of the innocent. AIDS is a secular metaphor which defines 'opposition' as, literally, fatal — and in defence of Life, all things are justified. As the bearers of a particular infection, gay men provide a suitably inflammatory adjective for other 'infections'.

In that disease is readable both as internal rot and as infestation, the disease metaphor reconciles the two ways of fearing the Other — It Came from Within and It Came from Outer Space (or the Soviet Union). Just as 'Scargillism' can appear at will as Bolshevik infiltration or as the inevitable product of degenerate Welfare socialism, so AIDS is either 'the Great AIDS Invasion' (*Sunday People*) or the inevitable product of misguided liberal tolerance.

Mahood can hardly have known what he meant, but he deserves a reward — perhaps Freud's book on jokes and their relation to the unconscious — for having leaked the British Secret.

Andrew Britton

Andrew Britton teaches Film Studies at the University of Essex.

beyond the people themselves. Why is it only handicapped people are subjected to these offensive criteria when the work of people without disability is judged entirely on its merits?

At a time when even established companies are having great problems obtaining funding, the tired

old dichotomy of art and therapy ensures that it is only those healthy of mind and body who can contribute to our culture. People with disabilities are consigned to day centres and draughty halls because their mode of expression is, in Ms Khan's invidious little phrase, 'less marketable'.



WHEN JUDGES ROLL ONTO THEIR BACKS

Decisions by judges have shown that the law is not 'above' politics. But, argues John Griffith, we should give up the pretence that it ought to be. Rather, clear defences of our democratic rights should be incorporated into our law, and judges required to defend those legal safeguards.

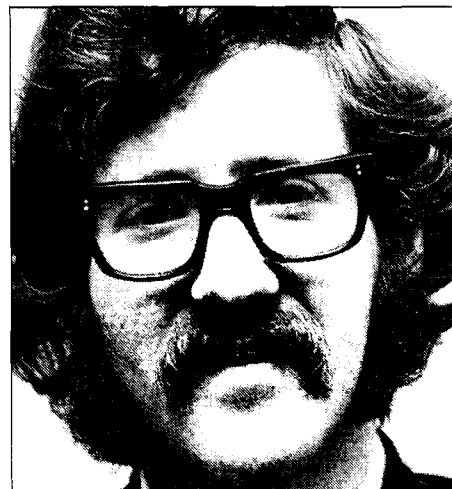
THIS COUNTRY is unique in the extent to which law and politics are considered as separate and distinct. Students of politics in universities and polytechnics are not taught to regard law and lawyers as a part of their subject. Politicians themselves treat the law, at most, as an alien factor occasionally to be taken into account.

Vague memories about some theory of the separation of powers result in a view of the judiciary as touching the real life of politics only on the periphery — even when judges are attacked as showing

political bias. Indeed, the notion of such bias presupposes a normal situation in which judges have a function which is neutral and for which they have been neutered, like eunuchs.

And so, when judges make what are seen as political decisions, there is a sense of outrage, of injustice. Perhaps recent events

Above: Campbell, Aubrey and Berry (left to right). Their trial was disastrous for the government. Right: Mark Hosenball — unexplained deportation



will begin to dispose of this myth and will help to foster the realisation that law and politics, judges and Ministers, are all engaged in the same undertaking, the exercise and management of public power.

Law is in truth an all-pervasive force, not merely something to be set over against political behaviour but integral, making a whole with it. Neither can be understood without the other. Law creates political

power and contains it. Politics provides the context within which law operates.

In the miners' dispute, we see the law operating to control the protests and the demonstrations. We see magistrates attaching bail conditions designed not to ensure that further alleged offences are not committed but to limit the activity of lawful picketing by cordoning off parts of the highway and forbidding entry to men and women who have not been convicted of any offence. At a quite different level, but for a comparable purpose, we see judges sequestering the funds of trade unions and refusing to allow receivers to free any of those funds for legitimate purposes, as part of a process of punishment of trade union officials.

One of the areas where, recently, the judiciary have been called on to make decisions in 'the public interest' is the consideration of claims by Ministers that their otherwise illegal activities are justified by the requirements of national security. Eight years ago, the American journalist Mark Hosenball was informed that the Home Secretary had decided that his departure from the United Kingdom would be conducive to the public good, as being in the interests of national security; and he was served with a deportation order.

The Home Secretary refused to give any details of the reasons for his decision and Hosenball appealed to the courts on the ground that he was being treated in a way that breached the rules of natural justice which, he claimed, required him to be told the case against him so that he might seek to reply to it. Lord Denning dismissed his appeal with these words:

There is a conflict between the interests of national security on the one hand and the freedom of the individual on the other. The balance between these two is not for a court of law. It is for the Home Secretary. He is the person entrusted by Parliament with the task. In some parts of the world national security has on occasion been used as an excuse for all sorts of infringements of individual liberty. But not in England. Both during the wars and after them successive ministers have discharged their duties to the complete satisfaction of the people at large. They have set up advisory committees to help them, usually with a chairman who has done everything he can to ensure that justice is done. They have never interfered with the liberty or the freedom of movement of any individual except where it is absolutely necessary for the safety of the state.

This was the case that led indirectly to the prosecution of Aubrey, Berry and Campbell and to their conviction under section 2 of the Official Secrets Act 1911, although the judge did not commit any of them to prison, granted the two journalists discharges of their convictions, and was generally critical of the way the

prosecution was handled.

Back in 1974, the Law Lords upheld an injunction obtained by the Attorney General to prevent the *Sunday Times* from publishing an article attacking the failure of Distillers Ltd to provide prompt and adequate compensation for the victims of the drug thalidomide, which had caused hundreds of babies to be born with appalling deformities. The United Kingdom, as will be remembered, was taken before the European Court of Human Rights which found that the injunction was an unjustified interference with freedom of speech and so a breach of the Convention. The government was under an obligation imposed by the Convention to change the law so as to conform with that decision and proposed the Bill which became the Contempt of Court Act 1981. Section 5 of that Act provided that a publication made as part of a discussion of a matter of general public interest was not to be treated as a contempt of court, if the risk of prejudice to particular legal proceedings was merely incidental to the discussion.

As the injunction against the *Sunday Times* had been granted by the UK courts because it was considered that the article would be in contempt of court in view of the possibility of legal proceedings being brought by the parents of the deformed children, this section 5 seemed to protect the publication of similar articles in the future. And when in 1982 the Attorney General sought to prosecute the *Daily Mail* for publishing an article by Malcolm Muggeridge in support of a 'pro-life' candidate at a Parliamentary by-election, at a time when a consultant paediatrician was being tried for murder of a mongol baby, section 5 was held by the Law Lords to provide a defence. However, Lord Diplock went out of his way to say that, in his opinion, that section could have provided no defence for the *Sunday Times* in the circumstances of the thalidomide case. So it seems that English law has still not been brought into conformity with the Convention on Human Rights.

THE CONTEMPT OF COURT Act 1981 provided, in section 10, that no court might require a person to disclose, nor was any person guilty of contempt of court for refusing to disclose, the source of information contained in a publication for which he or she was responsible, unless it was established to the satisfaction of the court that disclosure was necessary in the interests of justice, or national security, or for the prevention of disorder or crime. It will be remembered that, after Sarah Tisdall in October 1982 had anonymously sent a document to the *Guardian* about the arrival of cruise missiles at Greenham Common, the newspaper obeyed the order

of the Court of Appeal and handed over the document to the Ministry of Defence as a result of which Ms Tisdall was prosecuted and imprisoned for breach of the Official Secrets Act.

The *Guardian* appealed to the Law Lords claiming that section 10 of the Contempt of Court Act 1981 protected them and that they ought not to have been required to produce the document. The Law Lords decided against them by 3 to 2. For my present purpose, in considering the interlocking relationship of law and politics, the interesting aspect of the views then expressed by their Lordships was that all were agreed that the evidence put forward by the Ministry of Defence in an affidavit sworn by Mr. Hastie-Smith (who also reappears in the Ponting case) was most unsatisfactory.

What should have shown was that the return of the document was 'necessary' in the interests of national security. Two of their Lordships, in the minority, found the statements in the affidavit quite insufficient to discharge that burden of proof. Those on the majority decided that the facts could be 'inferred' from the statements. When it is remembered that we are here concerned with that vital aspect of freedom of speech — the right of journalists to protect sources of information — it is alarming that the highest court is willing to accept inferences in place of facts.

National security arose again in the GCHQ case. By the time the case reached the Law Lords in October 1984, one question remained. The Law Lords agreed that the civil servants at GCHQ had a legitimate expectation that they would be consulted by the government before a decision was taken forbidding them from continuing to be members of a trade union. This expectation had not been fulfilled and ordinarily this would have meant that the decision was invalid and of no effect.

But the government argued that considerations of national security overrode that expectation. The Law Lords stated that the government must produce evidence to substantiate its claim to the protection of national security. 'The government', said Lord Fraser, 'is under an obligation to produce evidence that the decision was in fact based on grounds of national security'.

When the case was first heard by Mr Justice Glidewell, the arguments turned on a number of propositions put forward by counsel for the trade unions; but the only one upheld was that relating to their legitimate expectation and on that ground the unions won. In the Court of Appeal, counsel for the Crown produced a new argument. This was that the reason why Ministers did not consult the unions was that to have consulted would have been



Clive Ponting: an attempt by the Government to subordinate the law to its own political ends

likely to bring about the very disruption that the banning of union membership was designed to avoid.

The evidence before the courts to support this view was, in my opinion, extremely slender. Neither the affidavit of Sir Robert Armstrong, the head of the civil service, nor statements made by Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, and others at the time made this argument. It would have been easy for them to have done so. But the Law Lords brushed aside this lack of evidence and merely asserted their satisfaction that this was the reason for the failure to consult.

Again, it seems that whenever 'national security' is mentioned, the inclination of the judges is to roll over on their backs and point their legs into the air.

I NEED NOT LABOUR the application of all this to the Ponting trial. There the judge was concerned with the much weaker claims of 'interest of the State'. To identify that with the interest of the government of the day demonstrates *not* my argument that law and politics must be seen as parts of an integrated whole, but something much more dangerous: *the subordination of statutory provisions to the wishes of political office holders.*

The coming together of law and politics is made strikingly visible in the European Convention on Human Rights. This treaty has been adopted by some 20 European countries, including the United Kingdom. It establishes a Commission and a Court to

adjudicate on petitions alleging that a member State has breached one or more of rights protected by the Convention. Most treaties permit allegations of breach to be made only by member States, but the ECHR allows individuals to petition, though a State may decide, after a period of years, to withdraw its consent to individual petition.

The United Kingdom has been arraigned before the Commission and the Court on many occasions and has frequently been found to be in breach, as in the thalidomide case. The rights protected are all broadly 'political', dealing with freedom of speech, fair trial, privacy, etc. and are not 'economic' rights.

Some of the rights are stated in nearly absolute terms but many adopt a curious formula. Thus Article 10 on freedom of speech is first stated as a right, subject only to a power to control by licensing certain kinds of expression. This is followed by a second paragraph which derogates from the first by providing that this freedom may be subject to such formalities, conditions, restrictions or penalties as 'are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society' in the interest, amongst other things, of national security, of the protection of health or morals, of preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, or of maintaining the authority and impartiality of the judiciary.

These words confer very wide powers of interpretation on the members of the

Court who must determine whether particular State actions, like censorship in particular cases, are 'necessary'. This is obviously a political judgement about the needs of 'democracy' and gives official sanctification to the union of law and politics.

A movement in the UK, led by people like Lord Scarman and Lord Wade, has for many years been urging that the European Convention should be enacted as part of our domestic law, as a Bill of Rights. This would mean that individuals who felt that one of their political rights, protected by the Convention, had been infringed by the State in one of its manifestations, would be able to bring an action in the UK courts or be able to cite the Convention in their defence if prosecuted in UK courts. Judges would be obliged to treat the Convention as a part of UK law, since it would then be an Act of Parliament.

THE DANGERS are obvious. The existence of such an Act, incorporating the Convention, would make much more difficult the passing of specific laws designed in precise terms to protect individuals from invasions of their liberties. The excuse for not legislating would be that the Bill of Rights already provided a remedy.

But that Bill of Rights would in reality be no more effective than the opinion of Her Majesty's judges as to what was 'necessary in a democratic society'. For my part, I would greatly hesitate to abide by that political assessment by the judges who presently sit in the Court of Appeal or the House of Lords. On the other hand, we have seen in the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 what is likely to happen when the politicians legislate.

There is no justification for ending this short consideration of the relationship between law and politics with a rousing paragraph calling for action. What is needed is much more mundane. It is support for those bodies who concern themselves with the ceaseless watch for authoritarian encroachments. Those occur almost daily, as witness most recently the IBA banning of the Channel 4 programme on MI5.

Phone tapping, the interception of mail, secret surveillance of all kinds are continuous activities. The failure of the last Labour government to take action, despite its manifesto commitments, shows how far we are from the introduction of radical reforms. The present depressing likelihood is that controls will be progressively tightened as the technological means to do so become more and more efficient. □

John Griffith is Professor of Public Law at the LSE. His book *The politics of the judiciary* is about to be republished by Fontana paperback.



Val Wilmer/Format

The burgeoning Black book trade

Margaret Busby

BACK IN THE 1960s, I turned up at the offices of a large publishing house where I had been invited for an interview. (In my application I hadn't mentioned the fact that I was Black.) The doorman, guarding 'Reception' like Cerberus at the gates of Hell, demanded to know what I wanted. I identified myself, explained about the appointment and named my prospective boss. This notwithstanding, he simply barked into the internal phone: 'There's a black girl here who says you asked to see her. . . .' I didn't get that particular job, and within a couple of years abandoned thoughts of a career in established publishing to become involved with starting a company from scratch (Allison & Busby's first full-time title in 1969 being Black American Sam Greenlee's *The Spook Who Sat by the Door*, a political thriller much rejected on both sides of the Atlantic which went on to success).

Although then it would have been unusual for a 'black girl' to break into the white-male-dominated British book trade, two decades later the fingers of one hand are too many to count Blacks of either sex employed in positions of responsibility — or even to 'sit by the door' as visible tokens — in the major publishing firms. Yet these same firms are increasingly producing titles with the buying-power of the multi-racial community in mind; and black-oriented books are enjoying a certain vogue among some of the more progressive houses. In the wake of the feminist publishing boom spearheaded by Virago and the Women's Press, writing by Afro-American women — Alice Walker, Toni Morrison, Maya Angelou, Rosa Guy, Paule Marshall, Ntozake Shange, Toni Cade Bambara, Audre Lorde — has made considerable impact (though the reissue of Harriet Wilson's *Our Nig*, the first novel published by any Black American, in 1859, is a reminder that they had something to say long before it became 'fashionable'). Then there are the books acknowledging the historical presence of British Blacks — the autobiography of Mary Seacole, a notable figure in the

Crimean War (Falling Wall Press) and Peter Fryer's history of black people in Britain, *Staying Power* (Pluto). And the anthologies: Sheba's *A Dangerous Knowing*, by four black women, and the Chatto book of Westindian-British poetry, *News for Babylon*.

As the flow of black poetic talent grows stronger — Linton Kwesi Johnson, Grace Nichols, Benjamin Zephaniah, Valerie Bloom, Marsha Prescod, Iyamide Hazeley, to name a few — often using 'nation language' and relying more on performance than print for communication, there is a lengthening list of those who are reacting to the frustrations of breaching the conventional commercial outlets by organising their own publishing ventures.

Typical of this trend is Akira Press, started by 23-year-old Desmond Johnson. Coming to London from Jamaica in 1980, he was inspired into action by existing projects like the Black Writers' Workshop and the Black Ink collective in Brixton. In eight months he has sold out a 5,000-copy edition of his poems, *Deadly Season Ending*, and in 1985 expects to bring out some 20 poetry, nonfiction and children's titles by various black authors.

Other new publishers include Yvonne Collymore's Arawidi, with books for children of Caribbean origin; Lorna Miller's Inky Fingers, producing a collection of her own poetry; Sandra Agard's Obatala Press; Karia; Karnak House; and Buchi Emecheta's self-publishing outfit Ogwugwu Afor.

A significant initiative in the pipeline is Black Womantalk, who say:

Black women have been either totally ignored by mainstream and white feminist publishers or been taken up as the 'exotic flavour of the year'. . . . We aim to provide employment in a co-operative situation where Black women work with and for other Black women. Being self-financing and sharing skills is also our aim.

In the USA, Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press have already led the way. One of their founding members, Barbara Smith, has written of the changing response there to Black women

as writers: the view that 'Black literature was what Black men wrote, women's literature was what white women wrote' has after 10 years made room for Toni Morrison on the cover of *Newsweek* and Alice Walker winning the Pulitzer Prize. Yet, aside from the 'above-ground' media allowing the creation of a few such 'stars', she stresses the more interesting movement for Black women and Black men to have complete control over the production and content of their own words. (By extension this includes all channels for disseminating literature — bookshops, distributors, printers, literary agents, etc.)

A KEY ELEMENT in the process is certainly the International Fair of Radical Black and Third World Books*, now in its fourth year, which provides a unique opportunity for exchanging information, experiences and strategies. Within the context of a week of films, poetry readings, concerts, meetings on issues relevant to the black diaspora and the Third World, it attracts participants from Africa, the Caribbean, America and Europe, though the involvement of mainstream British publishers is variable. Heinemann and Longman, with series specifically labelled African and Caribbean, are joined this year by Faber, who have just published *The Final Passage* by Caryl Phillips (blurb as 'the first of his generation to represent the recent Caribbean experience in a major novel'); absent are others with sizeable lists of black books, such as Penguin and Fontana.

The fair's organisers, important role-models for younger black publishers, have between them a record of over 40 years in the forefront of the community's move towards claiming a space in the British cultural and political arena.

*The Book Fair takes place 21-23 March, 11 a.m. to 5.30 p.m., at Camden Centre, Bidborough Street, Kings Cross, London NW1. Details of Book Fair Festival Week (17-24 March) events are available from New Beacon Books, 76 Stroud Green Road, London N4 (01-272 4889); or Race Today Publications, 165 Raiton Road, London SE24 (01-737 2268); or Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications, 5a Chignell Place, London W13 (01-579 4920). There are related events in Bradford 29-31 March.



Val Wilmer/Format

Top Linton Kwesi Johnson in Brixton and in glasses; above Ntozake Shange

New Beacon Books was founded as a publisher in 1966 by John La Rose, whose commitment to bringing books to the community began literally with him taking them in a Marks & Spencer carrier-bag to meetings. This developed into bookselling from his living-room, until the move to the present well-stocked North London shop. A characteristic NB title, *Jamaica Airman* by Martin Noble, recognises the need for Blacks to record their own history in this country. Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications began in 1968, perhaps their most influential title being *How Europe Under-developed Africa* by Guyanese historian Walter Rodney. BLO's book-selling activities also had their origin in a private home, that of founders Jessica and Eric Huntley, later taking premises in West Ealing (renamed the Walter Rodney Bookshop after Rodney's assassination in 1980). These two specialist outlets pioneered a tradition of community-based shops supplying black and Third World literature that includes Operation Headstart, Grass Roots, Sabarr and Soma Books. The third organiser, *Race Today*, flourishing for 10 years under the editorship of Darcus Howe as a campaigning journal, is expanding its book publication side. A current RT title, *Brickbats and Bouquets: Black Woman's Critique* by Akua Rugg, exemplifies the conviction that an independent black criticism is also essential.

The proliferation of autonomous black publishers reflects the mood among writers determined that their creative contribution is neither ignored nor prey to changing fashion. A parallel necessity is to include Blacks in the

mainstream organisations. Skills at present being acquired and shared at grassroots level must be augmented by more training opportunities (the Minority Arts Advisory Service, for example, is planning some publishing seminars at the end of March), so that Blacks have greater access to the whole book trade.

Novelist and editor Toni Morrison has said:

What I really want to do... is to make it possible for somebody else to do the same thing, so that young black writers, who don't even know they're writers yet, will think about it seriously, or that young black people could work in the publishing world. If one does then it's like an open door, so that it's a communal effort... one, tomorrow two, then three... It only needs one to open the door...

The vista then can surely only be richer for everyone. □

Labelled

Ben Okri

I SUSPECT that people invent categories in order not to take you seriously. To be a writer and to be black in Britain is to be in a corner. If you are not published because of colour, you are read because of it. The challenge and the freedom in the idea that a writer should be able to write about anything is true except for the writer who is black. And so starting from the

place that most writers take for granted — the place inside where something burns, and yearns for expression — the black writer is already at a great disadvantage. For their imagination is circumscribed, and the range of their expression is restricted, for the simple reason that no one is particularly interested in a black writer who wants to write as freely and as widely as possible.

After my first novel was published I found like many others before me that in order to exist I had to write reviews, articles, essays. I found simultaneously that the avenues were as limited as colour is limiting. Editors generally take the notion that a black writer can only write about a subject that is black. At first you take the world as you find it; you nurse the knowledge of the insidious circumscription. And then it gradually begins to bruise your creative fibre. I remember that after several years of battering my head against the ignorance of editors I had one genuine surprise. I met a literary editor of a magazine I would not name for fear of seeming biased; I asked to review books for the magazine, adding in the stream of lost faith that I would not mind some black and African novels. The editor exclaimed to me that I was a writer and should be able to review anything. I chose four novels by writers from different parts of the world; I reviewed them without difficulty. It is always a surprise to meet someone in Britain who understands that a writer is a person who writes. It is always a gift of faith to meet people who know that colour, class and sex are capable of being transcended by the imagination. I do not believe that there

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are three or four such people in the whole country. And because the level of enlightenment is low, the level of faith paltry, the black writer is perpetually in danger of sheering into silence.

There are other sides to the problem. I discovered also that fictionally the black writer finds it impossible to be published unless their works reek of colour. If a manuscript is about a subject that is not immediately black, headline black, then its relevance is dubious. Black writers tend to be published not because they write well, but because they say things that white publishers and a limited range of readers would like to hear. And if they are published then other things come instantly into play. When my first novel came out in the summer of 1980 I experienced a terrible series of insults from people whom I considered friends. I had one of them, who had been despairing to get a novel of theirs published, say that the only reason I was able to get into print was because I was black. And then there were others who maintained that an African writer could not hope for much in terms of achievement because the language was alien to them. On the one hand, there is this smug literary ghettoisation and on the other there is a curious form of competition, of resentment.

The awesome loneliness of writing is compounded both by misunderstanding and by rejection. Every writer who is black, whether they choose to acknowledge the fact or not, is fighting against a constantly descending wave of silence and erosion. The sadness of it is that reserves of creativity, which can raise the level of debate and energy in the environment, which can exhume the full stench of some psychic corpses, are lost to us all. It seems to me like there are a hell of a lot of walls to break down. Here is an example of one of them.

I HAD been working hard on a story set in Britain. The story was moving very slowly and I decided to go for a long walk. As I walked my anxiety lightened. I stopped under a street light to make a note for the story. When I had finished I noticed there were two policemen

walking in my direction. As they drew closer to me two things warred in my mind: should I cross the road, avoid them; or should I carry on without noticing them? I had not had a chance to decide when they stopped in front of me. They asked my name. It took three times to get it across to them. They asked if they could search me, and said it would be much easier for me if I agreed. They searched me. They emptied my pockets, peered suspiciously at my papers. One of them found my little tin of Tiger Balm and open it. What could they hope to find in there? Then the worst happened when the shorter of them looked through my cards and came across the note I had previously made for the story I was writing; he read it without comprehension and returned it to me. The other came up with an identity card and announced my name. I answered. He asked what I did. I told him that I was a writer.

— YOU WRITE? he said, incredulously.

— Yes.

— YOU WRITE? he said, again.

— Yes.

— What do you write?

— Stories.

— Love and things like that?

I nodded, for reasons of simplicity. There was a long silence as both these perfectly literate specimens of the British police force stared at me.

— You must be the only one who reads them, said one of the policemen, who then burst out laughing. He thought it perfectly funny.

— Published anything? the other one said.

— Two books.

Another long silence. I had really committed a crime. Their faces turned sour.

— Did you say TWO BOOKS?

— Yes.

They returned my things to me. They explained that I looked remarkably like someone else. They went on. How can one write without bitterness, without anger? It was a case of reality breaking in on fiction; many of us write from the nightmare; and we awake to find ourselves bruised with labels, hounded by hunger. □

Coming home

Adewale Maja-Pearce

TAKING A characteristically jaundiced view of the matter, the Ghanaian novelist Ayi Kwei Armah, writing in 1978, referred to Heinemann's African Writers Series as a 'neocolonial writers' coffer owned by Europeans and slyly misnamed "African". Not that his sentiments prevented him from publishing two further books with them, but its truth cannot be denied. It is odd, after all, that a novel written by an African for an African audience, even though in a European language, should be published in London. And the use of the word 'neocolonial', much abused as it has been, is entirely pertinent: whether Europe is making money out of African gold, slaves or literary talent, the end result, from the African point of view, is much the same.

Since 1978, however, the explosion of African publishing houses has been one of the most significant developments in the continent's affairs. This isn't to suggest that there was no indigenous publishing prior to this recent upsurge. The now famous Onitsha market pamphlets, known as chap-books in 19th-century England, were produced by the hundred for the entertainment of traders and travellers and have their origin in the period just after the Second World War. They covered a wide range of topics, best illustrated perhaps by a glance at their titles: *Escape, Arrest and Martyrdom of Lumumba* by Ogali A. Ogali; *Mabel the Sweet Honey that Poured Away* by Speedy Eric; *Sundry Advice About Life* by Okenwa Olisa, and so on.

The impetus for these new publishing houses has been, ironically enough, the world recession which, by limiting the amount of foreign exchange available to African governments, has cut into the profits of the European companies who depend on their African sales for a large part of their profit. Publishing African books in London or Paris is no longer as lucrative as it was in the 1960s and early 1970s and it is indicative of the current crisis that when Heinemann was taken over by the multinational BTR in 1983 there was much talk of axing the African Writers Series.

Current estimates claim that there are now more than 500 publishing houses in Africa, many of them located in Nigeria. That Nigeria should dominate African publishing is hardly surprising given that it is not only black Africa's wealthiest state, but contains within its borders almost a quarter of the continent's population. Heinemann's recent (1983) *Guide to African Literature* lists 50, but this is only the beginning: it takes no account of the numerous one-person publishing ventures located in backyard sheds in all the major cities in the country. Their books are distributed by relays of young boys who take advantage of the morning and evening traffic jams for which Lagos, in particular, has become world famous. Much of the stuff they churn out is the lowest grade sex-and-murder rubbish designed to titillate the bored commuter between home and office, but that hardly matters. It is enough that

News in brief

● GLC's first Black Literature Competition

Six categories of entries (each offering three money prizes), covering published work and unpublished work of all kinds — novels, stories, plays, poems, criticism, open to London-based writers. The closing date is 30 April and entry forms are available from Literature Competition, Ethnic Minorities Unit, 686A, Greater London Council, County Hall, London SE1 7BB.

● Some publications recently received

Black History for Beginners by Denise Dennis and Susan Willmarth (Writers & Readers, £9.95 & £3.95): an American-oriented book — 'Black history is the American history that was omitted from your textbooks' — in the usual Beginners' mix of drawings and simple text.

Telling the Truth: The Life and Times of the British Honduran Forestry Unit in Scotland (1941-44) by

Amos A. Ford (Karia Press, £7.95 & £2.95): the author, who himself served with the unit, includes quotes from the official records balanced by the real experiences of Black foresters as described in interviews.

Many Struggles: West Indian Workers and Service Personnel in Britain (1939-45) by Marika Sherwood (Karia Press, £8.95 & £3.95): essays on the Colour Bar in the British Military Services, West-Indian Munitions Workers in Britain, The British Honduran Forestry Unit and West-Indian Seamen.

Jamaica Airman: A Black Airman in Britain 1943 and After (New Beacon Books, £8 & £3.50): A. Martin Noble recalls his childhood, his RAF service during and after the war and subsequent struggle with the colour barrier in the British jobs market.

Breaking the Silence: Writing by Asian Women (Centerprise Trust £3.25): accounts of their lives by Asian women in the Dalston area published in their mother tongues (Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Gujarati, Punjabi) as well as in English translation.



Buchi Emecheta

books are being produced and sold, despite the often formidable problems these entrepreneurs face, including paper shortages, fierce competition from European firms and the country's poor transport and communications infrastructure.

These local publishing houses — if that is not too grandiose a term for many of them — are helped by the writers themselves, who naturally enough concur with Armah's assessment. Kole Omotoso, Flora Nwapa, Buchi Emecheta, Chinua Achebe and Armah himself are a few of Africa's prominent writers who have been only too eager to support indigenous ventures; indeed, Flora Nwapa actually owns her own publishing company, Tana Press. And even when these writers have allowed their books to be published abroad, it is only on condition that they appear locally first.

The ramifications of all this enterprise are far-reaching. In the first place it has given rise to a new assertiveness which cannot be separated from the knowledge that one's books do not have to satisfy a foreign audience at the same time as they are directed at an African one. This is not to suggest that the African author consciously places a limit on what she or he says when writing for foreign publication, or even that European publishers set themselves up as censors of work submitted. The process is a much more subtle one than this and has to do with the relationship of dependency engendered by such an undesirable state of affairs. At any rate it seems significant that the most radical and comprehensive analysis of African literature to date — *Toward the Decolonization of African Literature* — was published in 1980 by Fourth Dimension Publishing Company, based in Enugu, Nigeria.

Secondly, we have seen the growth in African language publishing, the most exciting development in African literature since Amos Tutuola put Africa on the modern world

literary map in 1952 with *The Palm-Wine Drinkard*. It would be impossible to overrate the tremendous importance of this development which is merely confirmed by the passions it arouses among African intellectuals on either side of the debate. But if we agree that a people's language is the essential life of its culture, we must also agree that without it they are nothing. The Kenyan novelist Ngugi wa Thiong'o, once a vociferous defender of the use of the English language to recreate the African reality and now committed to writing in his native Gikuyu, has put it this way:

Language is both a product of [the] succession of the separate generations, as well as being a banker of the way of life — culture — reflecting those modifications of collective experience in production. Literature as a process of thinking draws upon the collective experience — history — embodied in that language. In writing one should hear all the whispering, and the shouting and crying and the loving and hating of the many voices in the past and those voices will never speak to a writer in a foreign language.*

In other words it is the process through which Africans will rescue their history from the ravages of the European invasion and take control of their destiny. It entails the final break with Europe and the re-orientation of the African perception away from Europe and back to Africa. This is why the growth of African publishing houses is so significant. □

**'Return to the Roots' in Writers in Politics* (Heinemann, 1981).

PAPERBACKS

Word-hoards

Alan Brien

IN THESE QUEASY times when I cannot stomach too much truth in my fiction, I incline instead to the letters, journals, notebooks and reminiscences of, or about, the writers I admire. Here I hope to make direct and intimate contact with the person while indulging the jackdaw pleasure of variety in topic and place, change of mood from page to page. For a long while my regular bed-side or tube-travel companion would be a volume of Kafka's *Diaries*. These were always full of surprises, often unexpectedly, sometimes unintentionally, funny — I shall never forget the day Kafka left the nudist camp. It is not that he dislikes naked men, even naked old men, but naked old men ... *playing leap-frog?*

So I reached for Gustav Janouch's *Conversations with Kafka* (Encounter, £5.95) ready for more of the same, encouraged rather than put off by a quote on the cover — 'A work of highly dubious authenticity that nevertheless has swallowed uncritically by a hungry world.' In this conflation of two verbatim records by a teenage Boswell, the first published a quarter of a century after its subject's death, the second nearly 50 years after the meetings it supposedly documents, I



'Beautifully-written, low-key debut'. *The Sunday Times*

'An impressive debut... Caryl Phillips' prose is confident and understated. His poetic and descriptive eye... is as exact as his ear for dialogue'. *The Times*

'*The Final Passage* marks the debut of a talented writer... Phillips writes a nicely elegant prose, has a sharply observant eye and the effect is truthful, modest and convincing'. *The Guardian*

'Caryl Phillips' debut is worthy of attention... He is a young writer of great promise'. *The Standard*

£8.95 & £3.95 Faber Paperback

expected a fair amount of fiction with my fact.

But Hugh Haughton's Introduction shows that, however Janouch's memories had been received in 1951 and 1968, the world is no longer swallowing them uncritically. The most damaging attack is mounted by Kafka scholar Eduard Goldstücker who calculates that Janouch could have met his hero-victim over a period of no more, and probably much less, than 14 months. But he claims 320 separate encounters, an average of more than one every two days, which, considering Kafka's health, his jealous hoarding of his free time and his opinion of Janouch in letters to friends ('an awful nuisance'), seems beyond credibility.

Personally, I was more impressed by discovering that he describes sitting beside Kafka sometime after July 1920 while he receives the first copy of a story ('In the Penal Colony') which was undoubtedly published in 1919. Even then I could have settled for some interesting, entertaining or sensational lies. Unfortunately, the conversations at their most believable are frequently at their most platitudinous — 'If the theatre is to affect life, it must be more intense than ordinary life'. And what might have been examples of clairvoyant precision — 'Mussolini has the square jowls of the lion-tamer and the glass eyes of a cheap comedian' or 'The Revolution evaporates and leaves behind only the slime of a new bureaucracy. The Chains of tormented mankind are made out of red tape' — are undermined by our consciousness of Janouch's post-war hindsight.

Rilke, almost exact contemporary of Kafka, also an Austrian born in Prague, was a poet whose verses I at one time came to know only too well. My tutor at Oxford, J.B. Leishman, polyglot and -math, was translating them with Stephen Spender about whom I once overheard him observe — 'Oh, his German's adequate, it's his English that worries me'.

Spender's English is in splendid form in the Introduction to **The Notebook of Malte Laurids Brigge** (Oxford, £3.50). This is the alter-ego of Rainer Maria Rilke, for whom, as Spender observes, the name has 'the affinity of assonance' just as this fictional autobiography 'half-rhymes' with his life. Rilke, like Kafka, was, it must be admitted, a bit of a wimp, unnerved by almost anything that moved, and his prose sometimes trembles on the verge of the ridiculous the way Kafka's never does.

The creaky, Gothic family he invents for his impoverished Danish poet-in-exile might have come from Charles Addams, particularly the uncle who carried out mysterious experiments in a shuttered wing and was 'in communication with a prison whence once or twice a year corpses were sent him'. But Rilke's Paris as a city-maze of hospitals, along whose streets sick pilgrims queue, his world of freaks and hermits gathered in corners, his satiric fantasies about neighbours, living or long-dead, historic or imagined, are vivid and disturbing. Hardly a paragraph passes without some striking thought — 'No, no, nothing in the world can one imagine beforehand. Every occurrence is made up of so many separate details that cannot be imagined' — or a cryptic phrase that sticks in the memory — 'smiling as if she had teeth of sugar that were always melting'.

Francis King's mystery novel **Act of**

Darkness (Penguin, £2.50) is also written with exceptional, poetic accuracy and a concern for sensual detail. But I could not help feeling as I read a sense of *déjà-vu*. Where else had I come across this butchered child in the locked house of family secrets? A third of the way through I realised this was the *Constance Kent murder*, switched from mid-Victorian England to 1930s India but otherwise hardly changed at all. I continued to enjoy the style of the story-telling though the narrative tension inevitably slackened, and I could not help wondering about those critics of the hard-back who described as a luminous parable, or a brilliantly constructed plot, a sequence of events grounded at every point in fact.

Two novels by authors whose backgrounds seem poles apart, Stanley Middleton's **The Daysman** (Methuen, £3.50) and Yuri Trifonov's **The House on the Embankment** (Abacus, £2.50), but who share the ability to create in Thatcher's Midlands or Stalin's Moscow an entirely convincing community of real people whose lives gradually begin to obsess us like those of our friends and enemies, without resort to unlikely violence or glamorous backdrops, using a prose that is always measured.

Finally, a favourite of my schooldays, the essays of J.B.S. Haldane in a new selection: **On Being The Right Size** (Oxford, £4.95). I still remember how the title piece suddenly made scientific commonsense enlivening as I understood how giants could not exist because an anthropoid figure ten times our size would be a thousand times our weight, his bones cracking as he tried to stand, and there was the phrase we savoured about dropping living creatures down a mine-shaft: A mouse would walk away but 'a rat is killed, a man is broken, a horse splashes'. This collection preserves the shock tactics and the sting in the tail — who does not wish to read on after being told that there were only four really important inventions between 3000 BC and AD 1400 — 'general use of iron, paved roads, voting and religious intolerance'. □

FICTION

Words & things

Liz Heron

ROLAND BARTHES wrote that 'we could classify novels according to the frankness of their alimentary allusion...the alimentary detail...is the enigmatic supplement of meaning...but also something like a Brechtian tenderness for bliss'. He had Proust, Zola and Flaubert in mind. Rose Tremain's **The Swimming Pool Season** (Hamish Hamilton, £8.95) is a clear contemporary example of what he meant. In it the landscape of feeling and of social meaning is painted with a delicate attention to the details of food and drink. Food consoles, seduces, betrays; it marks rituals or their decay, intimacy and exclusion; it renders a sense of place and of time passing.

Oxford's eccentric fringes and a somnolent

Dordogne village are the alternating locations. Twinning them are the novel's pivotal characters, Miriam and Larry, a middle-aged, middle-class couple who left the Home Counties for France with the failure of Larry's swimming pool business as the long hot summer of '76 came to an end. Larry's swimming pools have become the grandiose dreams of a small man; he begins to build one in the village. All around are lives lost in their own longings, some pushing desperately towards the future, others clinging to memories and outworn talismans.

Repeatedly, the emotional strength of women shelters male dependencies and illusions, and it is the gradations of change (and of viewpoint) in this pattern that create the most interesting tensions: Miriam's late-flowering impulse to independence and achievement as a painter; the stubborn peasant rootedness of Gervaise, heading her ménage à trois; Agnès, the doctor's niece, ruthlessly in pursuit of a sexual self-determination the better to prepare her for a bourgeois marriage; the magnetic Leni, Miriam's mother, now dying.

But the power of individual characters is blunted by the mood of elegiac melancholy; change withers the structures of life and widens the gap between inner yearnings and outward realities. A state of harmony between the two prevails only once, at the centre of the narrative, when a blissful celebration meal, lovingly described, gathers Gervaise and her guests under the perfect mantle of love and friendship into what seems another time.

This is assured writing, enriched by carefully balanced symmetries and counterpoints, although distractingly diffuse in its focus. What makes me uneasy is its overwhelming sense of people dislocated in the present and an undertow of very English nostalgia for a past when life was kinder and more simple.

Food and wine are guarantees of a secure reality in **Sense and Sensuality** (Harvester, £8.95) but these are not enough to satisfy the demands of Rosalind Brackenbury's feminist poet caught in the dilemma of reconciling conflicting needs and warring meanings: commitment with the urge to get the best out of life, domestic safety with risk. As a fictionalised autobiographical inquiry this prompts immediate sympathy, not least because of its originality and its depiction of the heroine, from childhood to latter-day feminism, always as a learning and questioning individual, acting on her choices, even though these are often circumscribed by men.

But the very particularities of Alice's life and nature recast the book's proportions on a cosmic scale. Myth and the supernatural perform the work of joining irreconcilable polarities, and, while the imaginative leaps involved suggest interesting depths, they are also confusing. Incorporating odd time shifts and distinct narrative styles — a dream-like rushing stream of memory; a witty string of student-life vignettes; a more sober contemporary realism — the novel is floored by its own ambitions. At the same time Rosalind Brackenbury's writing is intense and wildly evocative, luxuriating in the surface textures of experience while delving into the enigmas that persist much deeper.

Continued on p.34

Shorter reviews

E. M. Forster: The New Collected Short Stories

ed. P.N. FURBANK *Sidgwick & Jackson* £9.95

Into E. M. Forster's Edwardian world of picnics, outings and holidays abroad, some grave scandal may at any moment intrude, a chance of salvation be lost or death enter violently. Curates meet Fauns on the Wiltshire downs. Englishmen in Greece announce, 'I do mind being old, and I will pretend no longer.' How are we to take all this? Forster himself once confessed to a friend that he had never recovered from being told he was amusing and this new selection of tales offers us the best and worst of Forster's unique mixture of frivolity and seriousness.

Most were lightheartedly written before the Great War, after which Forster felt he had lost his subject-matter. Then came *A Passage to India* (1924) and, convinced he would write no more novels, he began stories on homosexual themes which would not be published during his lifetime. Three of these, 'Dr Woolacott', 'The Life to Come' and 'The Other Boat', conclude this volume.

Despite Forster's periodic disclaimers about his short stories — 'these fantasies' — they are all meticulously arranged and clearly carry a message. In 'Co-ordination' Beethoven sits in heaven with his clerks assessing upper-middle-class maidens performing the 'Eroica' at the keyboard. How well are the girls playing? 'Since Beethoven was deaf, the clerk could reply, "With most intimate insight".' Then Miss Haddon, their music teacher, who has perfected a system of artistic coordination, is faced with the appalling truth that she isn't really musical at all. She has only pretended to be in order to make money. This crisis enables Forster the essayist to make some humorous points about education and rescue a story that was becoming silly.

There is no humour in 'Dr Woolacott'. In this powerful allegory, a young invalid squire's passionate encounter with one of his farmhands is subtly shown to be an erotic daydream. But fantasy, even death itself, is preferable to the half-life purveyed by Dr Woolacott, the family physician dedicated to keeping things as they have always been. It is a haunting, convincing story — one in which Forster's unspoken reliance on the social conventions and taboos he attacks is notably absent and where issues of both class and sex are taken up on a personal as well as literary level.

Alan Hurst

Gender and Generation

ed. ANGELA McROBBIE and MICA NAVA
Macmillan £15 & £5.95

This is the latest addition to a series which attempts to examine the question of youth in all its manifold patterns. The editors of this particular collection of essays have a specific objective: to expose the ways in which ordinary relations, experiences and representations of youth are crucially related to questions of masculine and feminine.

To fulfill their criteria, they present the reader with something of a mixed bag — on the failure of the youth service to provide amenities for girls, on the power struggle in sexual relationships between boys and girls, older and younger males, dance and disco culture, fantasy in girls' comics and magazines, to mention a few.

Inevitably, some of the essays are more effective than others at demonstrating the reality of feminine adolescence. One of the most successful concentrates on an 18-year-old involved in a photography project who, through her photographs, begins to be aware of the place society and her boyfriend's family are preparing for her. That the future for working-class women is most definitely in the launderette, while their men are enjoying life in the pub, seems to be the sad truth.

Barbara Hudson, in an essay on 'Femininity and Adolescence', demonstrates succinctly how teenage girls are faced with two conflicting sets of expectations. If they are rebellious and disobedient towards those in charge — as adolescents are expected to be — then they are failing in femininity, which presupposes submission and conformity. It leaves them feeling that whatever they do is wrong: 'a correct impression since so often if they are fulfilling the expectations of femininity they will be disappointing those of adolescence and vice versa', the author states.

The danger is that, while adolescent failings can be tolerated because they are temporary, any sign that a girl is rejecting femininity is treated as needing urgent intervention and resocialisation. Social workers, the author found, define the girls' rejection of the accepted form of femininity as promiscuity, which may be enough to place her in local authority care.

A recurrent motif in the essays is the awareness that, although we all strive to be anti-sexist and some of us to be feminist, we still need to be constantly vigilant of our intervention when dealing with young adolescents, particularly female ones.

Julia Hagedorn

Twilight Robbery: Trade Unions and Low Paid Workers

PHILIP PEARSON *Pluto* £2.95

Understandably, concern over employment in recent years has been dominated by the insufficiency of jobs. Aspects of jobs themselves, pay, conditions and overall quality, have taken a back seat in political circles, if not in trade union ones. Yet the serious level of unemployment should not be allowed to obscure the fact that, for many, the 'privilege' of

having a job is hardly that at all.

Depending on where the line is drawn, up to seven million workers in Britain are in low paid jobs. In contrast to the higher paid whose real incomes have been improving, the situation of the lowest paid is worsening, their position made increasingly vulnerable by government policy, employer greed and union ineffectiveness. Examples of low paid work can be found in most industries, though Pearson chooses hotels and catering, clothing and cleaning for special attention. The picture is indeed bleak.

With union organisation hindered partly by the dispersion of much low paid work, the way is open for unscrupulous employers to use the fear of unemployment to depress wages and maintain Dickensian working conditions.

The Government's approach to wage policy is seen to have exacerbated the situation, particularly by its notion that lower wages will price people back into jobs. This policy threatens the survival of remaining wages councils which set (with only partial success) minimum pay rates in areas inadequately covered by collective bargaining. Coupled with its dogmatic pursuit of privatisation, which puts a premium on the lowest tender and thereby acts to depress wage levels, government policy is shown to be working against the interests of the low paid.

Yet even within the trade union movement the low paid have their work cut out to gain effective support. While women and ethnic groups figure disproportionately among the low paid, they are conspicuous by their absence from union policy-making bodies. As a result, union pay claims continue to reflect the interests of the better paid by pursuing percentage-based rather than flat-rate increases, which leave the low paid progressively further behind.

In his final section (like many previous sections, regrettably short) the author outlines a longer term strategy for tackling low pay. In the short term, however, those concerned about the low paid must seek to counter the argument that lower wages create worthwhile jobs, and fight to prevent the dismantling of those few mechanisms remaining which seek to ensure that, if and when those unemployed cleaners, chambermaids and others do find jobs, they will in fact have been worth finding.

Paul Blyton

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Erika Hertz, the subject of Arthur Cohen's fictitious autobiography, suffers no dilemmas of choice between the senses and things of the mind. Early on in **An Admirable Woman** (Carcenet, £8.95) she concludes there must be only three groups of people in the world: those who, like Sartre, would call their autobiographies *Les Mots*, those who would call them *Les Choses* and those unable to decide between the two. She is in the first, one of the generation of Jewish intellectuals propelled into American academic life after flight from Nazi Germany, a character inspired, says the author, by Hannah Arendt. As a somewhat freakish chronicle of intellectual origins and preoccupations it has its fascination; Erika records the events of childhood, Berlin life and passage through Paris to New York in a lofty, disembodied register and a spirit of punctilious self-examination. It becomes dull as the 'life' loses the drama of this context and settles down into academic celebrity.

Graham Greene's **The Tenth Man** (Bodley Head and Blond, £6.95) was written under contract to MGM in 1944 and languished in their archives until 1983. In a mere 30,000 words it distils a number of Greene themes and paradoxes: guilt and betrayal, the status of truth, loss of identity, the question of free will versus determinism.

A group of men in a war-time prison draw lots to decide who will face a German firing-squad. Of the unlucky three, only one, a wealthy lawyer, refuses his fate. He persuades another man to take his place in exchange for everything he owns. The substitute's mother and sister become the beneficiaries. On his release the lawyer drifts back to his former home, where the consequences of his action are played out.

Heavy with atmosphere — a post-Liberation France steeped in fear and suspicion — *The Tenth Man* is schematic in its social detail and characterisations to the point where these suggest moral archetypes. It is still very much a period piece: a Faustian thriller charged with the brooding conviction of an Existentialist drama — and ready-made for film noir.

Apollinaire's **The Poet Assassinated and other stories** (Carcenet, £7.95) appeared in 1916 and this is the first translation in a British edition — though one that would have benefited from some explanatory notes and fewer recent American colloquialisms. In the title novella, a rambling, multi-parodic parallel of his own adventures through life, the hero ends by choosing martyrdom for the sake of poetic freedom. The 15 stories that follow could be taken as a vindication of his gesture. Highly coloured daydreams and tall stories archly told (there's even an April Fool leg-pull), full of puns and whimsy, random portents and macabre revelations, they are dispatches on how chance and unreason intrude in life and in death. When, finally, the poet is resuscitated from the grave to witness the havoc of war, in a hallucinatory vision he sees the book's characters tossed and rearranged in all directions. Apollinaire's was one of the most ardent poetic voices to welcome the promise and excitement of the 20th century and his prescience matches his exuberance. Reading these droll fabulations is like somersaulting backwards and landing at a signpost that shows the way to the modern movements. □

ART

Workaholic

John Spurling

Munch and the Workers

Barbican

EDVARD MUNCH was not so much a socialist as an anti-bourgeois. The paintings for which he is best known, which constantly shocked his contemporaries and especially his Norwegian compatriots between the years 1886 and 1908, were expressions of personal anguish with universal overtones. The emotional pessimism of his 'Frieze of Life' series, beginning with *The Sick Child* and continuing more or less open-endedly with such notorious shockers as *Vampire*, *Sphinx*, *Jealousy*, *Scream* and *Ashes*, was an extreme form of 19th-century romanticism, a feverish mixture of sex, sickness and mortality. Established society mocked and rejected these works because it felt threatened by them, but the threat was only incidental: Munch was absorbed by the conditions of his own life — his inheritance of tuberculosis, insanity, sexual repression and genteel poverty — which he explored obsessively as if there were no other conditions.

The parallel in our own time is Samuel Beckett who, with a less afflicted childhood, but equally driven by the effects of bourgeois repression on a particularly unbridled ego, transformed the same romantic anguish into savage comedy. Beckett's later work, though, has seemed more and more to shed its irony and sink into the underlying romanticism, whereas Munch — after his breakdown and voluntary spell in a Copenhagen clinic in 1908-9 — became distinctly more outward-looking and optimistic and, as he grew older, even reworked original motifs of anguish with a new decorative freshness and emotional objectivity.

Munch welcomed the social and political upheavals in Russia and Germany at the end of the First World War and he certainly approved of the workers, but in practice he led an even more isolated life in his old age, shut away in his house at Ekely, than he had as a young man, constantly travelling round Europe; and his approval of the workers reflected his own concerns more than theirs:

I wonder if small scale paintings will soon be pushed aside. With their large frames, they are merely a bourgeois art form designed for sitting rooms. It is an art dealer's art, a product of the French Revolution, that gained strength after the victory of the bourgeoisie. Now it is the time of the workers. Do you not suppose that art should again become the property of everyone, and resume its rightful place on the spacious walls of public buildings?

His attempts at public art of this kind were often abortive, through no fault of his own. Some of the murals for the dining rooms of the Freia Chocolate Factory in Oslo were installed, but those for Oslo's Town Hall were never made, since by the time the foundation stone was laid in 1931 Munch was nearly 70 and

unable to paint because of an eye disease. But, although the Chocolate Factory and Town Hall designs were concerned with workers as a class and some of them suggest, in the powerful way the figures push forward out of the canvas towards the viewer, an element of militancy, Munch's real interest in workers was as usual more personal and symbolic.

As the exhibition at the Barbican demonstrates, he had been making sketches of them from his earliest days, when he was still with his family in a suburb of Oslo and working in the Naturalist style which was then associated with Norway's *avant-garde* and had a political as well as artistic dimension. At this stage Munch's sketches of people in the streets were perhaps partly an alternative to what he didn't like about his home and partly just useful free models for an aspiring figure-artist, but later the idea of work in itself — the work of the artist equally with the work of farm labourers, woodcutters, builders, cleaners, etc. — became the only conceivable antithesis to misery and madness.

Munch seems in this much closer to Chekhov than to Ibsen: Ibsen analyses and excoriates the corruption of bourgeois society, but Chekhov raises his younger characters out of the abyss of private unhappiness with a Utopian faith in the power of work to alter the future for the better.



Munch's Cripple (after 1910) (detail)

Munch's workers come to stand for the principles of life and fertility and some of the same devices — looming foreground figures and deep diagonal perspectives into the space behind — that expressed despair and explosive frustration in the 'Frieze of Life' paintings are used again, in a new range of bright, lyrical colours, to convey energy, solidity and constructiveness.

Of the two new books on Munch published last autumn **Edvard Munch: Paintings, Sketches and Studies** (Thames & Hudson,

£24) by Arne Eggum, Director of the Munch Museum in Oslo, is much the better illustrated. Reinhold Heller's **Munch: His Life and Work** (John Murray, £25) goes into greater biographical detail, but without quite telling you enough, so that, for instance, the strange and damaging affair with Tulla Larsen which ended with a gun going off and Munch losing a finger-joint, becomes even more mysterious than ever. Heller tells us about Munch from outside, quoting his writings but never attempting to inhabit him, and the portrait is almost that of a monster, certainly that of a man impossible to like and hard to forgive for his relentless selfishness. Arne Eggum, concentrating mainly on the art, at least makes the selfishness seem justified by the outcome and sometimes, as in his brief discussion of the violent series of 'Green Room' paintings of 1907 — Munch's response to the Tulla Larsen melodrama — suggests a kind of sympathy for the man at his worst which can perhaps only be gained through the work, since for that, as he said himself, he sacrificed everyone and everything, even his own happiness. □

FILMS

Done to death

Francis When

Carmen (PG)

Lumiere

A Soldier's Story (15)

Classics, Haymarket and Chelsea; Screen on Baker Street; Odeon, Kensington

Phar Lap: Heart of a Nation (PG)

Warner West End; Gate, Notting Hill; Classic, Hampstead

IN ONE FORM or another, the story of Carmen has seldom been far from our screens in the past year or so. We have had Carlos Saura's flamenco version, Peter Brook's three slimmed-down versions and Godard's *Prénom: Carmen*. And now we have Francesco Rosi's film, billed as the first attempt 'to produce a faithful adaptation in an authentic setting'. His **Carmen** has an unimprovable cast and a big budget; the trouble is that Rosi seems to have been so obsessed with achieving his 'authentic setting' that he has missed the opera's point.

Nietzsche, famously, adored *Carmen*. He once wrote that Don José's final cry — 'Yes, I have killed her, I — my adored Carmen' — translated the tragic irony of love into a severe and terrible formula. One of Nietzsche's biographers, Ronald Hayman, mocks the old buffer for this comment, claiming that Don José's words are in fact trite. Yet Nietzsche, albeit unwittingly, was half-correct. Don José's line, like the opera as a whole, is formulaic; its subject, however, is not love but misogyny.

I am not for a moment suggesting that Bizet or his librettists intended *Carmen* as a study of misogyny; but that is what it is. In a male-dominated world, often the one power which women retain is that of sexual allure. Man fears



Julia Migenes Johnson as a sensational Carmen in a misconceived production

Woman because of her power, yet at the same time he is mesmerised by it. The consequence is hatred and violence. There is plenty of violence in Bizet's opera: on one occasion when Emma Calvé was playing Carmen she had to retire from the stage for an hour after her Don José had delivered an over-enthusiastic punch to her solar plexus.

In Rosi's *Carmen*, however, the violence is mainly confined to the gorily unequal battle between man and beast in the bull-ring. Rosi also fails to draw out the symbolic power of the moment when Carmen is led away with her wrists tied together. Bondage, both literal and metaphorical, is Man's typical reaction to his fears of Woman; yet even in her bondage she may not be entirely tractable, as Carmen herself shows.

What is so strange about Rosi's *Carmen* is that Julia Migenes Johnson, in the title role, seems well aware of all these points. She is a sensational Carmen, a raven-haired temptress who oozes seductiveness and danger in her smile, her voice and her writhing, snake-like dancing. She is Eve in the Garden of Eden, the embodiment of the woman that men both fear and desire. Yet I suspect that she achieves this in spite of, rather than because of, Rosi's direction, since all the other evidence in the film suggests that he is unaware of the opera's sub-text. He has spent so much care (and cash) on recreating his much-trumpeted 'authentic settings' that he has lost sight of the meaning of *Carmen*. He seems to have taken the preposterously old-fashioned view that *Carmen* is somehow 'about' Spain; hence the screen is filled with interminable shots of Spanish mountains, Spanish streets, Spanish fortresses — and he can't see the wood for the Spanish trees.

Norman Jewison's **A Soldier's Story** is another movie with a decidedly dated feel about it. Set in 1944, it's the kind of film that might

have been made 20 years ago with Sidney Poitier. The Poitier role is taken by Howard E. Rollins, playing a black Captain in the US Army who is sent down to Louisiana to investigate the murder of another black soldier, Master Sergeant Vernon Waters (Adolph Caesar). At first it is assumed that the Ku Klux Klan did it; then suspicion falls on two white officers; finally the Captain discovers that the culprit was in fact a black soldier from Waters's own company. I'm not giving anything away by revealing this, since it's grindingly obvious within about ten minutes of the film's opening that this will be the conclusion, despite the fact that Jewison tries to present the 'mystery' in whodunnit fashion, with excessive use of flashbacks as the dead man's colleagues tell their stories to the investigator.

The film, based on a play by Charles Fuller, seems to be groping towards some kind of Statement About Racial Prejudice, but it fails to get there. There are instances of the white troops' contempt for their black colleagues, but these in themselves tell us nothing we didn't know already. And the morality of the film is hopelessly confused: the murdered man turns out to have been a right bastard, yet the Captain has no hesitation in arresting the murderer. The same story can be found in any number of traditional whodunnits, but, as presented here, it doesn't seem to have any particular application to racism. Give it a miss.

The same, I'm afraid, must be said of **Phar Lap**. The peculiar title comes from the name of a racehorse, which, despite an unpromising start, became an unbeatable champion in Australia in the 1930s. I must say that I'd never heard of the animal, but Down Under he is apparently a legend. The film is an equestrian *Chariots of Fire* — so much so, indeed, that I'm surprised that no one's thought of suing for plagiarism. All the elements are there — victory against the odds, national pride, pompous

soundtrack music, constant use of slow motion whenever the runners hit the home straight. There is even, incredibly, a scene where Phar Lap runs through the surf. By the end I fully expected that the nag would go off to China to work as a missionary. □

THEATRE

Or not to be

Benedict Nightingale

'Night Mother

MARSHA NORMAN *Hampstead*

Other Places

HAROLD PINTER *Duchess*

'NIGHT MOTHER is one of the tiny handful — fingernailful, almost — of serious plays to have succeeded on Broadway in the last two or three years, and perhaps the most surprising. Who would have thought that the mink-coat class, which is pretty well the only one that can afford the prices around 44th Street, would throng to a piece which begins with a middle-aged daughter announcing her suicide, ends with the bang of the pistol itself, and in between consists mainly of level-headed explanation and apologia? Well, the reviewers raved, so they

came, and actually seemed to appreciate the play's poignancy and power, unlike some of my fellow-members of the corduroy-jacket class over here. Why the difference?

The American critics — and perhaps this is their main fault — tend to be satisfied these days with plays that see relationships in isolation. The British critics — and perhaps this is our fault — tend to think that every play must say something about the society beyond. If it doesn't appear to do so, either we blame the dramatist for his or her omission or we start ransacking the text for some less obvious social message. Into this second category would, I think, fall the not-untypical review I read last week. The writer noticed that at one point Jessie, the aspiring suicide, says that if she really liked rice pudding and cornflakes or something, she might consider staying alive; and so he concluded she was that representative figure, the frustrated consumer, the spoiled American dependent on her material goodies. More, he accused Marsha Norman of suggesting that such trumpery deprivation justified the great sin of self-slaughter.

That seems a pretty uncharitable simplification of the play. One might more defensibly see Jessie as a Beckett character who presses the logic of her predicament to the conclusion that her prototypes and counterparts inexplicably resist. She's a less extreme version of the middle-aged daughter in *Footfalls*, the one who ceaselessly searches for some explanation of her wasted life while her mother impotently watches from the wings. Her husband has deserted her, her son is on drugs, her adored father is dead. She feels used and rejected, like 'garbage', and she sees nothing ahead but empty time and space, interrupted by the odd conversation with her unimaginative mother and insensitive brother. Nor is that all. Like many of Beckett's characters she's afflicted with sickness, in her case epilepsy, and like some of them she reminds you of the remark he once heard Jung make about a patient: 'She had never fully been born.' Jessie wanted to become someone, she says, and that 'someone' never arrived. She never managed to be 'my own self', and now never will.

Actually, some of her feelings are rather un-American, or at least more than American. One of Ms Norman's aims is surely to isolate and define not just ennui and a shrugging despair, but passivity, helplessness, a loss of control over one's destiny that Europeans will more readily understand than their transatlantic cousins. All Jessie feels able to do to alter things is to end them. The only fresh choice open to her, she's concluded, is to put herself beyond choice. And so she does, wryly explaining that it's pointless to travel 50 or more enervating blocks on a bus if you can reach much the same destination by getting off at once. If the play has any 'social' meaning, one is more likely to find it here, in the suggestion that the power of the will is more limited than all-American philosophy pretends, than by attacking Ms Norman for saying that those who can't glut their ids and slake their egos might as well shoot themselves.

Mark you, she would seem to be defending suicide as a sane and sensible option for the emotionally derelict, an argument I find hard to swallow, since it gives warrant and colour to

deeds sometimes very damaging to those they leave behind. And yet the play is so alive, so far from dwindling into propaganda for Exit, that I wonder if I, too, am not simplifying its moral tenor. Certainly, I wondered that at Hampstead.

Perhaps I was over-influenced by Michael Attenborough's production, in which Marjorie Yates, raging then sagging then pleading in agonised incomprehension, grabbed the attention rather more than Susan Woolridge, gawkily poised the far side of the pain-barrier; but suddenly I felt what I hadn't when I caught the play in America, that it was written as much from the stance of the mother as of the daughter. Suddenly, I saw the hideous frustration of making every variety of appeal to a child bent on destroying what you originally gave her, namely life, and receiving nothing but cool and rational rebuttal in return. I wouldn't claim that Ms Norman thinks that suicides should be buried at the crossroads with stakes in their hearts; but she's the size and sympathy of mind to recognise that no one is an island, least of all in death.

The new *Other Places* omits what I originally thought the best of its three component plays, *Family Voices*; best, because its tale of a young man discovering himself in the big city took us further into gland, stomach, intestine — quintessential Pinter territory, really — then either its replacement, *One for the Road*, or the now well-known *Kind of Alaska*. Still, the latter brings us Dorothy Tutin, gaping in eloquent disbelief as the *Sleeping Beauty* awoken by modern medicine; and in the former, warmly received by the NS last year, Colin Blakely is horribly plausible as a highly-placed sadist in some British police state of the future. □

JAZZ

Back-tracking

Charles Fox

Blues off the Record

PAUL OLIVER *Baton Press* £12.50

Songsters and Saints: Vocal Traditions on Race Records

PAUL OLIVER *Cambridge* £20 & £6.95

LIFE BECAME more difficult for jazz record collectors during World War II but the conflict never put them out of action. Parcels of 78s braved the U-boats, sometimes ending up at the bottom of the Atlantic, all part of a swapping operation that went on even through the darkest days. Americans often packed the rare jazz items between commoner discs — by dance bands such as Freddy Martin's or Horace Heidt's. Or, much to the surprise of British recipients, they used 'race records', blues by singers with exotic names: Washboard Sam, Sleepy John Estes, Peetie Wheatstraw (subtitled 'The Devil's Son-in-Law').

The distinction between blues as played by jazz musicians and the multitude of blues

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Le Monde

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records produced exclusively for the black market was one that Europeans took a while to digest. Only after the war were the principal singers and performers listed and their styles analysed, a few older musicians even rediscovered and set to work again. A key figure in all that busy scholarship was Paul Oliver, by profession a lecturer on art and architecture. He was involved in advance of most Americans (the folklorists never seemed to take blues seriously) and long before Black Studies caught up with the task.

Blues off the Record brings together a number of articles written for specialist magazines and as LP sleeve notes. Topics range from guitar pickers and blues and barrelhouse pianists to portraits of individuals such as Kokomo Arnold, Brownie McGhee and McKinley Morganfield, the son of sharecroppers in Mississippi, who, as Muddy Waters, became synonymous with Chicago blues of the 1950s and an inspirer of the Rolling Stones (he recorded 'Rollin' Stone' soon after arriving in Chicago). But the way that research into blues has uncovered aspects of black American culture is now taken very much for granted. Which is why Paul Oliver has moved to fresh territory. **Songsters and Saints**, his latest book, is about 'race records' of music other than blues.

Those of us who in pre-war times knew all about Duke Ellington yet nothing of Bumble Bee Slim were at least familiar with a double-sided British Decca 78 of the Rev. A. W. Nix preaching his sermon, 'The Black Diamond

Express to Hell'. Oliver not only writes about its counterpart, 'The White Flyer to Heaven' ('God is the engineer/The Holy Ghost is the headlight/And Jesus is the conductor') but unveils a crowd of other Baptist preachers and their congregations as well as evangelists and 'jack-leg preachers' such as the superb singer and guitarist Blind William Johnson. Links with the end of the last century are pursued — with ragtime, medicine shows, coon songs. It is even suggested that Peg Leg Howell, the first rural black singer to get on record, was recalling an incident of 50 or more years earlier when, in 1926, he sang of how 'The train run off the track last night/And it killed my lovin' Corinne/Her head was found in the drivin' wheel/And her body have never been seen'. (A contemporary photograph shows Howell in a transparent pose, rather like a visitant in a psychic snapshot.)

The book concentrates on recordings made between the mid-1920s and the onset of the Depression, a period during which over 1,000 records a year were issued by the major companies in their 'race series'. As one advertisement put it, the range took in 'Vocal Blues, Religious, Spirituals, Hot Dance, Sermons and Novelties'. Both Columbia and Victor records sold for 75 cents at a time when the average annual income of black families in Southern cities was less than \$300. Oliver promises a further volume, to include, among other topics, the vaudeville singers. Meanwhile, for anyone interested in black music — or black American society — the

present book seems essential. Luke Jordan's 1920s song about a hustler even contains a moral for our own times: 'I called my Cora, "Hey, Hey"/She come on sniffin' with her nose all sore./The doctor (say he) won't sell it no more./Says "Coke's for horses, not for women and men"'.

DANCE

Retrograde

Stephanie Jordan

Royal Ballet

Covent Garden

NOWADAYS, the New York City Ballet perform **Ballet Imperial** as 'Piano Concerto No. 2': Balanchine, in old age, removing any programmatic references, however vestigial, from his output. Besides, he said, nobody understood the Imperial bit any more. For their new production of the work under its original 1941 title, the Royal Ballet are trying to prove him wrong. They have, too, the legacy of warmly remembered productions with Fonteyn, Beryl Grey, etc. from past decades.

In his design, Christopher Le Brun has interpreted the 'Imperial' by means of a backdrop of a lonely triumphal arch bedecked,

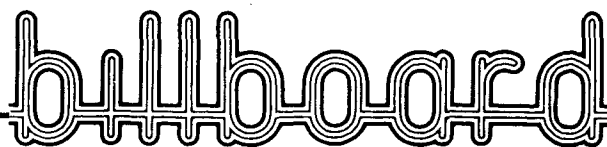
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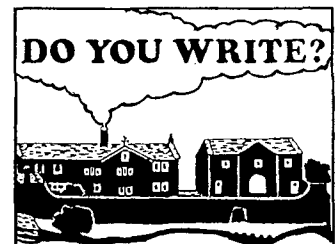
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Music

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Literature

CONSTANCE CUMMINGS on 'Shaw's Heroines'. Friday, 22 March at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. Coffee 6.30 p.m. Meeting 7.00 p.m.



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like the stage itself, with imaginary rather than national flags. It casts a dark shadow upon glory, perhaps to illustrate the music of Tchaikovsky, which epitomises the gulf between a civilisation's imperial pretensions and the desolation of the individual within it. This is hardly the right approach to the work of a choreographer unconvinced by the need for any programme. It is also hard to imagine a set less appropriate; or, indeed, sillier costumes: tutus and jackets smothered in decoration, the girls' headdresses rising like tufts of feathers from their foreheads. Well, we've had other rotten productions, but the dancing is an additional disappointment here. With the *corps*, a lot of proper misses, grinning uncomprehendingly, and Bryony Brind, the soloist, swamped by some formidable passages, the awkwardnesses of which are the soul of the work, *Ballet Imperial* looks totally misphrased and makes no sense. When misguided, as this project surely is, strong technique can look weak. In fact, that's what you get for putting the clock back. I gather that the Imperial version was not approved by the NYCB, so we didn't have the services of John Taras, who mounted a perfectly acceptable *Agon* at Covent Garden last year.

Number Three, Michael Corder's third choreographic enterprise for the RB, is his best so far. Unlike Jiri Kylian's **Return to the Strange Land** which preceded it on the programme and which both abuses the dancers and tramples the music, Corder gives us respectable dancing and respect for Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3. Here, the designs (there are three) by Helen Frankenthaler are supportive rather than obtrusive. I have doubts about the efficacy of a work which combines the visual impact of exuberant abstract splashes and washes with the straight line formations and spatial discipline of ballet set to an early modern/romantic melodic score. But the designs act with the choreography by accumulation from white background with limited colour and rough lines, via black splash to red wash, motifs picked out in the dancers' all-in-ones. A programme note daintily informs us that Corder is unhappy with these costumes and will substitute plain white at alternate performances. He'd do much better simply to get rid of the incongruous sparkle of jewelled headdresses and earrings.

Corder's choreographic contribution is clever, fluent and holds your attention if only by sheer physical vitality and fast movement for its cast of 30. The threeness pervades. Three women, three pairs and three groups frame three soloists: the central pair, Lesley Collier and Mark Silver, with Brind an instructor figure in the most interesting dance conversation, the Second Movement. Certainly Corder is developing his craft, by hard work, but there is still a lack of stylistic purpose. You can spot his sources: hippy isolations from jazz, Ashtonian fast footwork and *épaulement*, as well as that universal racy modern ballet with its streamlined poses and sudden reversals of turnout and traditional placement. Perhaps he has just a little too much regard for Prokofiev's diffuse mosaic. In responding to every shift of musical mood and tempo, tied fussily to musical rhythm, he has fragmented the score rather than unified it. □



Nick Meland

On being a specimen

Michael Lewis

ANYBODY who dedicates his or her life to the study of endocrine glands must be motivated by the idea of 'secretions', for an endocrine gland would not be an endocrine gland if it did not 'secrete'. The thought of these ductless organs, dispersed in various places throughout my gut and for ever 'secreting' hormones directly into the lymph vessels of my blood stream, took on a larger-than-life form as I sat, an angst-ridden potential specimen, awaiting my physical examination. Following a loose thread in what might be called life's rich fabric, I found myself in a discreet corner of a large South Dublin hospital complex, in the ominous waiting room of what was sinisterly known as 'The Endocrine Centre'. For IR£20 a day plus bed and board, I was offering the single most valuable asset I possessed, namely myself, or more specifically those bits of me collectively called my endocrines, for the purpose of medical experimentation.

I had no idea what to expect, but my imagination was fertile enough, perhaps even diseased enough, to visualise all sorts of grim scenarios, reinforced by the Hammer horror odour of the place. There was the noticeable fragrance of a strong preservative, possibly formaldehyde or maybe poteen, which made one think of patients being fermented in underground vaults until needed. One could easily imagine in this setting that some twisted

and misunderstood genius might be grafting chicken wings on to the shoulder blades of anaesthetised subjects.

'Don't worry pal, you might be one of the lucky survivors,' a companion said with an impish grin, obviously relishing the tell-tale signs of anxiety on my face, such as cold sweat and a certain waxen pallor which suggested that I had just been prepared for burial.

But I felt that I was legitimately anxious. I know, for instance, that the endocrine family of glands includes some fundamentally essential components of my total self. The pituitary gland is part of the brain stem, the thyroid is somewhere in my neck, the pancreas is deep inside my viscera and I even have 'sex glands'. Some of my most intimate personal treasures are endocrine glands and it would not be in my interest to harm them in any way. My other great fear was that the 'thorough physical examination' I was about to undergo would reveal some mysterious terminal ailment, perhaps never before seen in the history of medical science. Instead of getting a warm bed for three nights, all the roast beef and Yorkshire pudding I could eat and colour television, just to name some of the anticipated perks, I would be flung out into the street as a defective organism unfit even to be a laboratory animal. You really feel low at a time like that.

Aqua 39, I learnt at the outset of the

examination, was a newly developed heart drug recently arrived in Dublin from an unnamed continental location. 'It's in the clinical phase at the moment, and so far we've only used it on 12 people,' a man in a white coat told me with a directness of stare which hinted that, if I played my cards right, I could be the lucky thirteenth. But I noticed that whatever good cheer this technician was trying to affect, and he did contort his mouth in an unattractive parody of a smile, he said nothing of what had become of those 12 fellow earthlings, those unseen brothers and sisters, who had tasted Aqua 39 before me. And I didn't have the courage to ask, what with those chicken wings still on my mind.

There then followed the deeply embarrassing episode with the phial. After having had a plethora of fingers poking at the oleaginous folds of my belly, I was handed a small glass phial and shown into a cupboard about the size of a large shoebox. I caught on immediately. They obviously wanted me to discharge the contents of my bladder into the glass phial, the only drawback being that my bladder was agreeably void of content. It's a very strange form of impotence, standing in a small room flexing the right internal muscles to urinate when there aren't any reserves of the golden nectar to call upon.

The technician wasn't very impressed either, and his silly grimace turned quickly into an equally unappealing frown. A good guinea pig should be conditioned to react at the press of a button. It was beginning to look as though I lacked this key Pavlovian quality, and that being research fodder was not, perhaps, my true vocation after all.

'Have you, or any members of your family, ever suffered from any mental disorder, such as schizophrenia or any other similar paranoid delusions?' the technician asked in an aggressive and threatening manner (or so I thought at the time). 'No, never,' I squeaked taking a step back in case he tried to attack me. By this time, my curiosity was waning. Besides the phial, I had had blood taken from me, various metallic objects secured with vaseline to my tender flesh and a longish interrogation about my medical history conducted in a spartan room with nothing but a cold aluminium stool to support me.

It was an ordeal, and one that I was happy to terminate. I had spent the entire morning in the company of people who were more apparatus than human. The Centre had a totalitarian air about it, and it was the atmosphere of control as much as concern for my organs which put me off in the end. I decided to keep my endocrines to myself. □

Among this week's contributors:

BEN OKRI is the author of two published novels, *Flowers and Shadows* and *The Landscape Within*. He has recently completed his third novel and has been working on a collection of short stories.

ADEWALE MAJA-PEARCE is currently working on a book about African literature.

LIZ HERON has recently edited *Truth, Dare or Promise: Girls Growing up in the Fifties* to be published in June by Virago.

New Statesman 15 March 1985

Naseem Khan Taped



IT WAS A dispiriting thing, sitting in the office of London Video Art recently, watching some of the independent tapes made over the past year of the miners' strike. On the screen optimism and certainty. Out on the streets the miserable end of the dispute.

So shouldn't these tapes now be shut away somewhere, like embarrassing old relatives prone to come out with home truths at inopportune moments? Is there any point in considering them now, with the dispute over? In fact the tapes (or some of them) got an extra promotional push last week. The context at first seems a slightly odd one. Hugger mugger with scratch video, art video and experimental film, they form part of a new package that will circulate between three open access video libraries — Nottingham's Midland Group, Bristol's Arnolfini and Newcastle's Media Workshops. The package is a deliberately broad one, reflecting the range of new work available on video from the avant-garde to the issue-based (and a fair amount of overlap in between). But, strange though some of the miners' bedfellows are, the judgment of Mike Stubbs who assembled the package (and which gives each centre access to 37 new tapes as opposed to the three or four they could normally afford to buy) is absolutely spot on. The miners' campaign tapes form one of the most interesting and far-reaching developments of the year. And their effects are likely to last far beyond the dispute.

The first surprise is how little they are known outside the mainstream of the strike. It's not that they are a one-off phenomenon; there are a lot of them around, with more rumours of footage shot by individuals than anyone's had time or opportunity to follow up. Most emanated from different video workshops around the country. Some workshops, like Chapter Film and Video Workshop in South Wales, had the asset of a long and close relationship with their local NUM. One of its results was the fundamental *Case for Coal*.

Arguably the most prolific producer has been Platform Films, a small London-based unit. It was they, for instance, who were responsible for *Not Just Tea and Sandwiches*, a video about the part played by miners' wives and part of Mike Stubbs's touring Network One. That film, said Chris Reeves of Platform, marked the start of their involvement, a very early one. Seven more came — among them tapes on the history of pit closures (*The Coal Board's Butchery*), the police (*Only Doing Their Job*), the media (*The Lie Machine*), *This Man MacGregor — Portrait of a Parasite*. Funded by the union movement and endorsed by the NUM, they are a deft compilation of work shot by a group of ACTT

Technicians and by Film and Video Workshops. They have sold like hot cakes.

It's not, of course, the case that unions are strangers to video. But, said Reeves, they've concentrated on specific issues — such as privatisation — and they've tended to present officials giving official views in set pieces to camera. The miners' campaign tapes are different. Firstly, they eschew figure-heads. The voices and faces in them come from a broad sweep of the rank and file; regional accents reflect the spread of the mining community. Their tone is not official. It's informal, lively, human. A miner from Orgreave describes soberly 'our lads laid out, 50 or 60 of them, like a battlefield'. Reports of armies of pickets at Parkside are convincingly crushed by solid local miners while wives react angrily to press reports of 'petticoat pickets' apparently demanding their men return to work: 'They will eat grass first!' Intercut are some speeches, but they're shots of public meetings (and in fact seem oddly histrionic by comparison with the more down-to-earth quality of the miners and their wives), and much footage of the picket line. Essentially they are exercises in documentary reportage set within a crisp campaigning framework. Because the various bits came from different sources, there is occasionally a hiccup in quality, but nowhere as much as one would have expected given the speed of the operation. Three weeks the first one took, said Chris Reeves, from conception to completion.

The demand for the tapes has been phenomenal. At least 2,000 copies of each cassette that Platform produced went out. Free to miners, each costs a mere £5 hire to others. Quick, topical, cheap and functional — what more could one ask? Their functions have proved surprisingly broad. In some ways they have superseded the pamphlet and leaflet. They made contact between pits and regions, bringing the experience of one area into another. They cheered, encouraged, informed, suggested: linking Kent to Corton Wood, Doncaster to Durham; shown widely in miners' lodges and welfare centres, they provided a visual record of unity through diversity. They also provided a counterweight to the images miners saw almost every night on television.

They had even more uses than that. Increasingly miners were being called on to speak in fund-raising meetings. Not all were at ease with the role. The videos proved a potent ally: show the video, answer questions and who needs speeches? And it's remarkable how many more people would apparently turn out at a ward meeting for a video rather than a simple meeting or discussion. Remarkable too has been the videos' direct fund-raising ability. Some miners took campaigning tapes to Australia; they raised £11,000 from the trade union movement there. Even better was the trip two of them took to Norway with four tapes. They came home with £20,000 donated by dockers.

Fund-raiser, speech-maker, communicator, morale-raiser, the campaign video has demonstrated more clearly than anything before a fruitful area of potential development. Maybe before, for instance, sinking huge sums into a Labour Party paper, a detailed look at the possibility of a video circuit might not come amiss? □

TELEVISION

Hugo Williams Pain

I HAD IMAGINED that *Last of the Summer Wine* must be some kind of all-time 'low' in dishumour. I see now that there is a whole bunch of these make-it-up-as-you-go-along 'comedy' things over on ITV — *Up the Elephant and Round the Castle*, *Chance in a Million* and now **Roll Over Beethoven** (ITV) to name but one — which must actually look up to *Wine* as something wildly sophisticated and amusing, the leader of the pack, perhaps. I thought alternative person Nigel Planer might have some taste, but here he is going in for amateur theatricals just like the rest. And who's that slaughtering Chuck Berry in the background?

Such shows never get hammered in the heavies because the middle classes assume it's working-class entertainment, therefore sacred, a catch a lot of people are making pretty sickly capital out of. Just as it is impossible to understand why the superpowers need to stockpile 80,000 nuclear warheads, one of which can easily bore to death the entire world any evening, so it is hard to understand why ITV feels at liberty to use our early evenings as warehouse space for so much rubbishy brain overspill. What's it for? one wonders, apart from employing actors and typewriter-ribbon makers?

Well, we know what it's for, of course. It's gunge to stick between the ads, isn't it? It's that old licence to print money. Scripts are sometimes called 'properties'. This kind of chronic ribbon development would be better left open to the fields and to the sky, especially now that spring is in the air. Whatever you do, don't watch anything they put on the cover of *TV Times*. That's the ultimate sign they've got another turkey looking for sponsorship.

IRISH LOVE STORIES (C4) has been too short a pleasure. The first of three, *A Painful Case*, was from a story by James Joyce, in which the pain is caused by a socially castrated bachelor clerk and suffered by the married woman he courts and then turns cool on. Mr Duffy is a closet philosopher who makes observations about life to keep it at arm's length. 'I call my little sayings and jottings my wild beans,' he tells Mrs Sinico. She doesn't know that they are the only wild beans she will get from him, despite his declarations.

The story is a conflict of periods, he Victorian, she Edwardian, and of their respective moral styles. Wherever we look, the modern confronts the old, leaving Duffy on his defensive. As always in Joyce, the story has musical parallels: the classical versus the popular. Mrs Sinico asks him to play the piano for her, but he declines her suggestion. They take tea. 'I know so few people interested in music, Mr Duffy.' Mrs Sinico is interested in the works of Elinor Glyn, therefore available.

'I'm not a Music Hall man, Mrs Sinico.' 'I suppose you're not, Mr Duffy.'

Music Hall versus Chamber music, dinner versus tea, the parlour versus the bedroom, Ibsen versus Mrs Sinico's earthier instincts: 'Have you read the plays of Ibsen, Mrs Sinico? He tells us more about the way we should live . . .' 'I know how we're supposed to live, Mr Duffy.'

The clerk imagines he is one of nature's rebels just because he once contemplated robbing his bank. The film shows him barred safely in his cage, while Mrs Sinico throws herself under the wheels of the slow train that has whispered throughout the story. It whispers her name to Mr Duffy, who asks himself how he can ever have been so deceived about the woman. The play went on whispering things long after it was finished.

The following week of the series was even better, a vintage William Trevor called *Access to the Children*, a red light to any middle-aged man thinking of leaving his family for a younger woman he meets at the airport, if she's from a different class and country and has a bamboo bed. It's the same old story: the conflict of backgrounds producing a very Irish kind of tragedy.

The story was sketched along conventional triangular lines in flashback from a disastrous day out with the children: 'Oh Daddy, we're not going to the zoo are we?' From the husband's squalid new flat, his brief luxury with his English pick-up, various episodes in his affair and the decision to leave home, we move surely to the awful conclusion, the kind of truth we have to call fiction in order to accept. Too drunk to drive the children home, he invites himself in for the imagined reconciliation and is the only one not to know what's awaiting him. 'Anyone can make a silly mistake,' he pleads. 'You can be forgiven for making a silly mistake.'

Not in a short story you can't. That takes a novel to arrange. All the same, I'd have preferred her to have given it a try: more human, less neat.

Last in the series, *The Eagles and The Trumpets*, was by James Plunkett, a classic tragedy in green, a country girl and a town boy and what happens on the night he fails to turn up for their reunion. They have met and passed an idyllic unconsummated weekend in flashback in the little country town where she is librarian.

'This town you keep talking about,' his office chums tell him, 'you won't get far there, not with everyone knowing what everyone else had for breakfast.' We see his girlfriend trying to fix a room at the hotel under the full gaze of local interest, notably that of a drunken travelling salesman, who cheeks, ribs, charms and finally takes her to dinner when the boyfriend — by now getting paralytic waiting for a vital loan to be repaid in a succession of Dublin pubs — fails to show. 'When you married your wife,' the girl asks him before finally abandoning her youthful illusions, 'did you love her?' 'I can't honestly remember,' he tells her, voicing her own suspicions for her affair and our own that none of these 'Irish love stories' was about love at all, but rather the lack of it, or the impossibility of love between opposites in a divided country: 'inauspicious' as the Catholic Church discreetly calls it. □

Weekend competition

No 2864

Set by S. J. Dixon

'...my friends in the Security Services have been able to "pont" details of their masters' behaviour.' (Pendennis, *Observer*, 3.3.85.) It seems that the English language has just been further enriched. Could readers continue this process by providing verbs, nouns, adjectives or adverbs (with definitions and examples of correct usage) derived from the names of other contemporary notables? Max. five by 27 March.

No 2861

Set by E. O. Parrott

Famous sonnets summarised in a single rhyming couplet.

Report

By Ernest Oswald flap

You've made an old man's eyes quite moist with your brilliance — besides (dare I say it?) shaking his faith in the genius of Messrs Milton, Keats, Manley Hopkins and co. If you can say it all in two lines, one wonders, why couldn't they? But enough of this prattling; over to you. Three pounds per printed couplet.

Hopkins's *Hurrahing in the Harvest*

The cloud, the corn, the hills, the sky, the breezes:
It makes you want to give three cheers for Jesus!

WILL BELLENGER

Milton's *To the Lady Margaret Ley*

What you say about your dad is true,
But, for my part, I really fancy you.

R. J. PICKLES

Rossetti's *Remember Me when I am Gone*

When I expire, I'd like you to regret it,
But if it's going to make you whinge, forget it.

Keats's *When I Have Fears that I May Cease to Be*
When struck by fear of premature decay,
I shut my eyes until it goes away.

Wordsworth's *Tax Not the Royal Saint*

Don't knock the builder. Get things in perspective —
It's meant to be sublime, not cost-effective.

NOEL PETTY

Wordsworth's *Earth Hath Not Anything to Show*
Nice view from here; just stop and look a minute:
Ships, towers, domes, theatres. Pretty, innit?

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

Milton's *On his Blindness*

Nowt to do but stand and wait,
And only forty — bloody great.

W. S. BROWNLEE

Wordsworth's *Milton! Thou Shoudst be Living*
England's gone bad and stinks like rotten Stilton,
She needs a disinfectant, such as Milton.

JOYCE JOHNSON

Shakespeare's *Let Me Not to the Marriage*
However things may shift you'll find true love will
still endure;
Of that my gal — or is it guy? — I solemnly assure.

KEN RUDGE

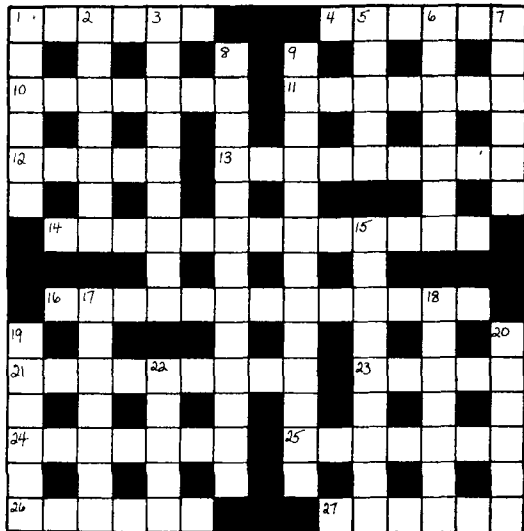
Brooke's *Love*

I'll blow the gaff, it's all a gull:
Sonnets are fun but love is dull.

T. GRIFFITHS

Weekend Crossword 1472

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1472, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 26 March.



Name _____

Address _____

ACROSS

1. Goes through again and cuts down about a hundred (6)
4. Hills where one starts putting in fruit (6)
10. Worry about a receptacle for the gun (7)
11. Music for an animal in a shaggy coat (7)
12. Somewhere in the room a hard chair is placed (5)
13. Moving star I made to turn into play (9)
14. Law enforcement procedure which makes one bury the law (13)
16. Changing direction since there is nothing in retreating in disorder (13)
21. Victor William (9)
23. Get rid of fish at about tenpence (5)
24. Make me turn round before the couple have a cuddle (7)
25. One advertisement in six cut to pieces to show where the trains go (7)
26. Team which puts the foreign student in first (6)
27. River always running from point to point (6)

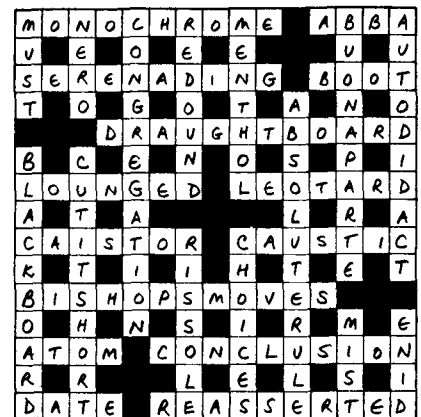
DOWN

1. Consider that of those in the wreck only half would be saved (6)
2. Confident although one is in a peculiar sort of trance (7)
3. The vessel in which a soldier is superior to the queen (9)
5. Town which makes a vessel without iron (5)
6. Serene love expressed by famous tenor (7)
7. Pieces of wood used for wards (6)
8. Being kind, offer to take notice about cultural activity (13)

9. Hit which is the most direct way of getting out (8,5)
15. Servant pursues honour for part of book (9)
17. Honour in time when no blessings ensue (7)
18. Write up music for a god (7)
19. Plan for me to join a woman without starting cohabitation (6)
20. Part of machine which gives point to the illustration (6)
22. Give us time for practice (5)

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ATTRACTIVE, LEFT, London-based female, seeks John Williams/Paul Foot/Melvyn Bragg o.n.o. (1), (n/s), to share, care and enjoy life with. Phone no. with letter please. Box (11) 0453.

BUSY, PROFESSIONAL woman, 46, div., with interesting and rewarding career, beautiful home, cultural interests, seeks similar unattached man, for fulfilling relationship. London. Box (10)0432.

CUDDLY, SHY male, 29, seeks caring female for friendship and perhaps more lasting relationship. Warm and friendly personality more important than looks. Children welcome. Interests: music, countryside, politics. NE England or anywhere. Box (11) 0469.

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GENTLEMAN (56), non-smoker, educated, refined, would go anywhere to be handyman/companion to lonely, attractive woman. Long walks countryside together. Box (11) 0488.

EDUCATED DIVORCEE seeks cultured, kind man, 56-65, also looking for new happy future. Interested the arts, the outdoors, travel. No affair seekers please. W. Sussex. Box (11)0462.

FEMALE (41) lapsed academic, musical, literate, writer of unpublished novels, enjoys real wellingtons as well as opera, widow with son (12) living Devon, but close touch London, would like to meet humorous, intelligent male, hopefully with child(ren). View weekends, hols, possible permanence. Have car, can travel. Box (11)0470.

GAY WRITER, with various vital interests, 30s, seeks an intelligent young man (21 +) with whom to develop a relationship of value and integrity. Box (11) 0449.

MALE, 44, good-looking, unsatisfactorily married, seeks warm and understanding female, 30s, who may be similarly placed, for full and loving relationship. Box (11)0472.

MALE GRADUATE, 46, tall, divorced, in caring profession, good humoured, warm & sensitive. Interested mainly in the arts but enjoying all other usual life's activities, seeks an intelligent, well educated female, of similar make-up, for lasting relationship. Midlands. Box (10)0396.

MAN, SUCCESSFUL, attractive, 48, 5' 8", likes music, theatre, books etc. Seeks intelligent and attractive younger woman for mutually rewarding friendship. London. Box (11) 0484.

NOT A HAS-BEEN, more a never-was, not bad-looking, greenish, leftist, somewhat introspective, socially unsmooth, 41 yr-old London woman with sense of fun, bicycle and two cats, seeks non-smoking close friend/partner with telephone. Box (11)0468.

PROFESSIONAL WOMAN Graduate, single, 47, mellowed left-wing, interested everything bar sport and domesticity, loves boats, London, the arts, jazz, travel, moorland, driving, the sea, sampling different cuisines. Has irreverent sense of humour and love of language, enjoys puns etc., seeks similar man 45-55 preferably London/Essex. Box (08)0299.

THE MARRIAGE BUREAU (Heather Jenner). 124 New Bond Street, W1. 01-629 9634. Consult us for individual attention.

SIR, - YOU ARE

neither a pebble on the beach, nor a needle in a haystack! Like me, you are quite distinguished. We appear to have elected to stay alone: we are so charming, sexy, accomplished, independent, confident, ubiquitous. . . No one suspects our yearnings & dreams of lasting happiness (a second time). Should the impetuous need for a soulmate, playmate/lower cease after fifty? For us, - never! Touché? Then please write fully, in confidence, with photo - I promise to respond equally.

Box (11)0477

SLIM, ATTRACTIVE, affectionate, professional woman, divorced, late 40s, lively, caring, sensitive, socialist. Many interests, especially arts. Would like to share love, life, laughter with man similar age. Yorkshire. Box (11) 0483.

SLIM, ATTRACTIVE man, 34, single, good company, seeks similar woman partner, Manchester area, for theatre, films, meals. Photo and phone no. please. Box (11)0471.

SOUTH YORKS: friends but no soulmate? Attractive male, 35, seeks female, 25-35, for caring, sharing relationship based on sincerity, laughter and companionship. Box (11) 0482.

'THE NEEDS of Strangers'. Warm, spirited, cosmopolitan London woman is travelling hopefully in search of mature, amiable, intelligent, cultured male friend and weekend companion. Box (09)0363.

WEST MIDLANDS. Male, 36, non-smoker, interests are short stories, poetry, countryside, walking, theatre, cinema. Would like to meet woman, age immaterial, for caring relationship. Box (11)0450.

WITTY WOMAN, 41, professional, socialist, single parent, and very discriminating, seeks stimulating and loving male company, sane, heterosexual and accessible SE London. Impossible quest? Box (11)0451.

WORLD CITIZEN, Greek male, 40s, writer/poet in English, into psychology, spirituality, Eros, communal living, seeks fun-loving lady, any nationality, 25-40, similar tastes, share life/love, Athens. Photo appreciated. Box (10)0427.

WOMAN DESIGNER needs amusing, socialist man to make her glow again. You'd be positive, affectionate, solvent, 35+, parent maybe, available in London. Box (10)0388.

43-YEAR-OLD divorced woman would welcome company of unmarried man of similar age with similar interests: classical music, the countryside, friends, food & drink, science and general contemplation of the human condition. Box (11) 0454.

YOUNG WOMAN in her fifties, living South London, quite attractive, now unattached and lonely, would like to meet tall, uncommitted chap with sense of humour for wining, dining, talking, visiting theatres, operas, etc. No desire to rush things; it would just be good to have a few laughs again. Box (11)0456.

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2 year contract including modest living allowance and flights. Regret no funding for dependants. Applicants must be resident in the UK or Ireland.

For further details send short c.v. and large s.a.e. to Kathy Bourassa, International Voluntary Service, NS12, 53 Regent Rd, Leicester, LE1 6YL.

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- carrying out research projects as required;
- providing verbal and written Member briefs;
- liaising between the political parties, and Authority Departments on behalf of Members.

The post carries a casual car user allowance and relocation expenses and temporary housing accommodation may be available in certain circumstances.

For an Application Form and Job Details please contact the Personnel Manager, Personnel Department, 7th Floor, Arundel Towers North, Portland Terrace, Southampton, SO9 4ZF. Tel: Southampton 832832 (answerphone out of office hours, quoting reference no. AD01).

Closing date 29th March 1985.

Southampton City



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invites applications for the post of CENTRE DIRECTOR

Suitable applicants will have a professional qualification in youth work and proven administrative ability. Salary negotiable with full benefits.

Applications with CV to:

The Chairman, Barkingside JYC,
54 Beattysville Gardens, Barkingside,
Ilford, Essex IG6 1JY

all applications will be treated in strict confidence.

OV SELECTION have a number of vacancies for temporary & permanent office staff with typing skills. We welcome enquiries from mature people as well as College leavers. Phone Odette Veazey, OV Selection (Emp. Agt), Abford House, 15 Wilton Road, London SW1V 1LT. 01-828 8345.

SOCIAL RESEARCH. Opportunity for graduate to work in race relations, monitor anti-semitism. Essential: proven writing skills, proof-read, no clock watcher. Send CV a.s.a.p. Box (11)0480.

WRITER LECTURER. early retired intermittent Parkinson's Disease, offers room, keep and £45 per week for care and maintenance of house and himself, and relieve teacher wife. Suit someone seeking rural calm. Box (11)0479, or ring 03598 683.

FINANCIAL

IMMEDIATE ADVANCES £100-£25,000. Written terms on request. Regional Trust Ltd, 31 Dover St, London W1A 4RT. 01-491 2934.

SALARIED PERSONS Postal Loans Ltd. Loans from £50. 175 Regent Street, London W1. For written quote apply: Tel. 01-734 1974.

SCHOOLS

A. S. NEILL'S SCHOOL 'Summerhill' is alive and well, thank you. We have vacancies for boys and girls 6-10 years-old. Apply Ena Neill, Summerhill School, Westward Ho, Leiston, Suffolk, IP16 4HY.

AWARDS

THE GEORGE ORWELL MEMORIAL AWARD

A grant will be made of **£2,000** to begin in **October 1985** to help produce a piece of work on a theme that might have interested Orwell. As well as merit, need will be considered. *This year the award is for non-fiction; an award for fiction will be offered in 1986.* **CLOSING DATE: 30 APRIL 1985.** Details from: **The George Orwell Memorial Award, c/o Secretary, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, London, WC1E 7HX.** Please send s.a.e.

PURSUIITS

CHAMBER MUSIC: competent pianist (29) needs other musicians (e.g. violin, cello for trios) for sightreading/rehearsal/-performance?/. Repertoire contemporary as well as 19th/20th Centuries. E. Berks/NW Surrey. Tel. 0734 787181.

MALE GRADUATE 25, classical music lover, seeks similar friends for concert, opera, theatre visits; also correspondence or friendship with Italian speakers. Merseyside/Manchester. Box (09)0357.

PROFESSIONAL ASIAN, solvent, socialist, 40, interests reading, writing, talks by writers, travel, needs female companion to share pursuits. London based. Interest in India useful. Box (11)0478.

PROFESSIONAL MIDDLE-CLASS woman, very youthful fifties, divorced, seeks friends. Politically left of centre. Interests theatre, arts, conversation, beginner's golf, small dinner parties. Mutual support. Box (11)0448.

WOULD YOU like to join pleasant, lively minded female, 49, in London on a Saturday for a good play or film followed by supper. Box (11) 0455.

STATEMENT

SOCIALISM MEANS a new World Society, no buying and selling, no wages nor profits. Work will be co-operatively organised on a voluntary basis and the product of that work will be freely accessible to all. For free introductory material write to: SPGB, 52 Clapham High Street, London SW4. Phone 01-622 3811.

BOOKS / PUBLICATIONS

LAURISTON HALL Castle Douglas, SW Scotland. Send s.a.e. for Calendar, or £1 for 2 yr sub. to Newsletter.

REVIEW COPIES and other books in fine condition bought and sold by Vermilion Books, 57 Red Lion St, London WC1. Tel: 01-242 5822.

SECONDHAND BOOKS wanted all types and quantities. Clifton Books, Southend (0702) 331004.

POLITICAL PUBLICATIONS

HERE & NOW Libertarian Communist journal out now. Articles on schooling, Kampuchea, and the modern situation. 65p by post (cheques payable to GPP) from Box 2, Changes Bookshop, 340 West Princes Street, Kelvinbridge, Glasgow.

THERAPY

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TENSE? SUFFER from stress, muscular pain or insomnia? Experienced acupressurist and masseuse, skilled in shiatsu. Elise 01-722 9887.

GENERAL SERVICES

HANDWRITING ANALYSIS. Send s.a.e. for free brochure. Scriptus (NS), 8 Bonhard Road, Scone, Perth, Scotland.

QUALITY TYPING. English, German, French. Moderate charges. Anne Shotts: 01-452 6617.

SCRIPTS TYPED. Experienced playscript typist. Rates negotiable. 01-892 8874.

THE TYPING POOL a women's co-operative. Professional low cost typing of articles, thesis, letters etc. from script or tape. Translation and typing of French, German, Spanish and Italian. Central London. Tel: 01-430 0381.

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LUXURY CHEAP HOLIDAYS!

Rent or exchange a family home in Holl., France, Italy, Europe, USA, etc. Large internat. circle of teachers, MDs. Letting of your (2nd) home, paying guest arrang. also possible. Drs N.S. Binkhuysen, Home Holidays, POB 279, 1900 AG Castricum/Holland.

COACH HOLIDAYS 1985

ITALY — LAKE GARDA from £98; departures: May 11: May 18: April 27: May 25: June 15: June 29 Aug 17: Sept 6: Sept 28: Oct 19

YUGOSLAVIA from £145 full board; departures: May 11: May 18: May 25: June 8: June 28: Jul 6: Aug 3: Aug 17: Aug 28: Oct 12

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67 High St, HECKMONDWICK
West Yorks WF16 0AD
TEL: 0924-401739

BUDLEIGH SALTERTON. Cottage overlooking mouth of River Otter and sea (2 mins). Sleeps 4. Gas, TV etc. From £80 p.w. 01-435 0171.

CHEAPEST FARES. Paris, Caracas, Port of Spain, Singapore, Sydney, Hong Kong, Jo'burg, Nairobi, Istanbul, anywhere. Fareplan, 60-66 Wardour Street, W1. 01-734 9772.

CUBA SPECIAL. Two weeks holiday including six day tour plus seven days hotel beach resort. Departing 7 April and 26 May. £595 per person. Must book now. Ashley Holidays, 131a Bawtry Rd, Wickersley, Rotherham. 0709 543626.

JOURNEY LATIN AMERICA. Low cost flights, holiday journeys. 3-6 weeks. JLA, 16 Devonshire Road, London W4 2HD. 01-747 3108.

ACCOMMODATION VACANT

ACADEMICS VISITING. We have furnished flats near British Museum and Universities — Helen Watson & Co. 01-580 6275.

PRETTY VICTORIAN house in Notting Hill, sleeps 6, to rent for approx. 6 weeks over summer holidays. References necessary. Box (11)0475.

RESPONSIBLE PERSON for own room in comfortable house, Dalston, £150 p.c.m. inclusive. 01-241 0648.

ACCOMMODATION EXCHANGE

DIXIE IN SUMMER — professor offers sizeable two bedroom flat cooled by air conditioner & ceiling fans; fenced garden, walking distance shops; small town with big university; exchange similar preferably near London late June through early September or part. Fabel, 203 West Drake, Auburn, AL. 36830, USA.

PERSONAL

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EASTER TRAVEL BARGAINS

PISA, FLORENCE, ROME, ELBA . . .£135
5-14 April (21-29 Sept.).

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6-13 April 13-20 July, 27 July-3 Aug.

LENINGRAD via GDR . . .£195
30 March-11 April (12-24 August).

PYRENEES, ANDORRA, LOURDES . . .£135
6-14 April
Highlights the spectacular mountain scenery.

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YUGOSLAVIA . . .£165, 26 May-7 June.

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25 May-2 June.

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MOSCOW BY TRAIN . . .£190.

11 day holidays leaving every Tuesday from 9 July to 17 September.

ORIENT EXPRESS to the BLACK SEA . . .£155.
Dates as Moscow plus 25 June-5 July, 2-12 July

KIEV by train £180

16-26 July, 23 July-2 Aug, 30 July-9 Aug

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Huddersfield HD1 3JQ.
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LISTINGS

FRI 15 MAR

CAMDEN First Strike Cabaret — benefit for the Springfields defendants with 'Spare Tyre Theater Co.' OVA, 8pm Oxford Arms, 265 Camden High St, NW1. Adm. £3. Org. South Camden CND 01-380 1534.

LONDON Artists Union (painters, sculptors, artworkers) London Branch meeting 6.30pm-8.30pm at AU Headquarters, 9 Poland St, W1.

SAT 16 MAR

LONDON Hungry for Change — food and the world's poor. workshop & spkr James Smith (UNA) Adm 75p/35p UB40. Org. World Development Movement at Swiss Cottage Community Assoc. 19 Winchester Rd, NW3. 01-586 5272.

LONDON 'Proposed closure of Psychiatric Institutions and alternatives to them' study day org. by British branch of International Network for Alternatives to Psychiatry. 10.30am-5pm 153 Hammersmith Rd, W14. Details: Steve Ticken 01-586 2819.

BRUNEL University 'Police, Young People and the Law' Conf. 2pm Details: 01-561 9400.

SMETHWICK 'Trade Unions & Equal Opportunity Policies'. Spkrs. Ken Gill, Gen. Sec. AUEW (TASS), Bill Morris, Nat. Sec. T&GWU. 10.30am-4.00pm Sandwell Community Labour Club, Oldbury Rd, Org. Sandwell CRC/Trades Councils. 230A High St, W. Bromwich, W. Midlands B70 7QG.

HASTINGS 5th Robert Tressell Memorial Lecture: 'A Spiritual Elect?' — Robert Tressell and the early Socialists by Raphael Samuel. 3pm Falaise Hall, Adm. £1/50p UB40. Org. WEA Hastings & St. Leonards 0424 44686.

SUN 17 MAR

LONDON 'The Middle East in the light of recent epochal events' by Prof. P. J. Vatikotis, Prof. of Politics, London Uni. Sch. of African & Oriental Studies. 8pm 56 Lymington Rd., NW6. Org. MAPAM

LONDON Viva: Dance, Music Poetry Benefit for Chile. 7.30pm Sadlers Wells Theatre, Rosebery Ave, EC1. Tickets £2.50-£8.50 (reductions for UB40s) from Box Office 01-278 8916. Details: Chile Cttee for Human Rights, 13-16 Borough Rd, SE10AL 01-928 2099.

MON 18 MAR

BARNET 'Labour and the Media' Spkr. Phillip Whitehead. 8pm 104 East Barnet Rd. New Barnet. Details: David Beers, Barnet Fabian Soc. 01-205 3462.

LONDON Hilary Wainwright discusses problems of economic conversion from military/defence programmes to civil industries. 8pm Harwood Community Centre, Ferdinand St, NW1. Org. Camden CND 01-380 1534.

TUE 19 MAR

BARKING HOSPITAL Mass Picket 6.30am-10am on 1st Anniversary of cleaners strike. Help fight for decent cleaning standards and a decent NHS. Details: Strike Line 01-592 5038/595 4252.

BRITTON Teddy Taylor and Bruce Kent debate Disarmament. 8pm St. Matthews Meeting Place, Brixton Hill, SW2. Details: Bruce Merdeen, Brixton CND 01-274 5917.

WED 20 MAR

LONDON 'Stress at Work' Film & Talk 1pm City Centre, 2nd Floor, 32-35 Featherstone St, EC1. Org. 'City Centre' Information & Resource for office workers 01-608 1330/1338/1339.

LONDON 'Religion, Morality & Politics' Series: Mgr. Bruce Kent, of CND on 'Christians and Nationalism'. 1.05pm St. James's Church, 197 Piccadilly, W1. Adm. £1/50p UB40. Details: 01-437 6851.

THURS 21 MAR

DUDLEY 'Future of the Left' 7.30pm Smiling Man Pub, Town Centre. Spkr. Martin Jacques, Ed. 'Marxism Today'. Details: 0384 238216.

SAT 23 MAR

CHESTERFIELD Alternative Defence Conf. 10am-4pm Chesterfield College of Technology. Spkrs. incl. Phill Gummatt, Peter Johnson, David Evans. Adm. £2.50/£1.50 UB40. Creche, vegetarian lunch, refreshments, workshops, exhibition, bar, stalls. Disabled please notify in advance. Bookings/Details: Buxton 3080 Rob Vincent or 872133 Jan Rockett, Derbyshire Federation of Peace Grps.

KINGSTON-upon-THAMES Peace Council/CND Demo. Assemble 11am Kingston Poly, Penrhyn Rd. March through Town Centre against Cruise & Trident. Refreshments after march at Friends Meeting Hs, Eden st.

LONDON Popular Fronts Revisited — celebration with photos, exhibitions, films and discn. on the lessons to be learnt from experience of the 1930's at City University. Details: Jackie Heywood CPGB, 16 St. John St, EC1M 4AY. 01-251 4406.

LEEDS 2nd annual conf. of British Miner writers. incl. Dai Smith on Jack Jones, Gwyn Thomas, John Cunningham on Idris Davies. Enrolment £5/Details: Diane Jacks, Dept. of Adult Education, Leeds University 0532 431751.

FORTHCOMING

29 MAR LONDON Talking about Rape & Race 7.30pm Tolmers Sq, Community Centre, Foundry Mews, NW1. Spkrs. Ruth Hall, Wilmette Brown. Disabled access, creche, light refreshments. Women Only. Details: King's Cross Women's Centre, 71 Tonbridge St, WC1. 01-837 7509.

29 MAR MARBLE ARCH Anti Cruise Vigil 6-11pm S. Camden CND takes its turn to maintain weekly vigil org. by London Quakers. Details: Peter Langan 01-380 1534.

30 MAR GLASGOW Land for the People — one day conf. Third Eye Centre, Sauchiehall St. Advance booking £2/£1 UB40 from Janet Law, The Lodge, Blackford, Perthshire.

30-31 MARCH BIRMINGHAM FREEZE — 1st National Assembly of British Nuclear Weapons Freeze, Digbeth Civic Hall. Details: 82 Colston St. Bristol 0272 276435.

2 APR GREENWICH Meeting to set up Bexley & Greenwich branch of Socialist Health Assoc. Spkr. Joy Mostyn 7.30pm Town Hall, Wellington St, SE18. Org. SHA, 195 Walworth Rd, SE17 1RP 01-703 6838/704 4706.

2 APR NORTH LONDON Meeting to set up branch of Socialist Health Assoc. 8pm Red Rose Centre, 129 Seven Sisters Rd, N7.

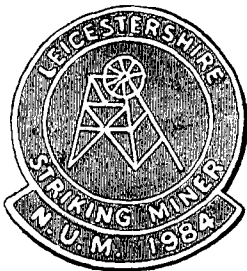
13-14 APR LONDON 2nd Politics of Bisexuality Conf. 10am-5pm Lesbian & Gay Centre, 67-69 Cowcross St, EC1M 6BP. Tickets: £2.50 for wkend (£2 in advance), one day: £1.50/50p UB40. Creche/accommodation available/disabled access. Details: BM/BI London, WC1N 3XX.

26 APRIL MOLESWORTH Peace Camp. Cycle rides from all over Britain will converge on USAF Molesworth. SE Ride starts in London on 22nd Apr with full back-up. (Money raised is for OXFAM & Campaign Against Arms Trade.) Details: Ride for Life, C/O Brixton Cycles, 433 Coldharbour La, SW9 01-671 1965/733 6055.

27 APRIL LONDON Preparation Meeting for UN Conf. on Women Nairobi 1985. 1-6pm Tolmers Sq Community Centre, Foundry Mews, NW1. Women only. Disabled access/creche/refreshments. Details: King's X Women's Centre, 71 Tonbridge St, WC1. 01-837 7509.

11-12 MAY MANCHESTER 55th Annual Gen. Meeting of Socialist Health Assoc. Details: 01-703 6838/701 4706.

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.



'Dirty 30' Leicester Striking Miners still need your support

Commemorative items which are being sold in support of the Leicestershire Miners include:

Tankards £5; Plates £5; Die Cast Badges £5; 'T' Shirts (M, L, XL) £3; Posters 50p.

NS readers who so generously supported us can now buy these items and help the struggle continue

**Write to: Dave Douglas, 24 Aber Road, Stoneygate, Leicester LE2 2BA
Tel 0533 708125, mentioning NS.**

SOUTH LEBANON SOLIDARITY MEETING

In support of the Lebanese National Resistance and the victims of Israeli occupation

SPEAKERS:

INAAN RAAD

Syrian Social Nationalist Party

ALI AL-HOSSEINI

Amal Movement

Representatives of the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Middle East Councils.

CHAIRMAN:

NADIM DIMECHKIE

Former Lebanese Ambassador

6pm Thursday, 21 March

**Royal Commonwealth Society Hall,
Northumberland Ave, London WC2.**

Organised by the South Lebanon Solidarity Committee

CAPITAL READING SEMINARS

Every Friday 7 p.m.

1st Floor

BLOOMSBURY TAVERN

236 Shaftesbury Avenue,

London WC2

(nr British Museum)

Monthly speakers invited to answer questions e.g.

Bob Rowthorn, Alex Colnicox, Jeff Pilling, Hillel Ticktin, Eric Hobsbawm, Andrew Glynn, Geoff Hodgson, Simon Mohum, Alan Freeman etc.
Details: 01-354 0668
01-398 4852

German Historical
Institute, London

Tuesday 19 March 5 p.m.

Professor Hans-Jürgen Schröder
(Giessen)

*Economic Aspects in National Socialist
Foreign Policy 1933-1939*

17 Bloomsbury Square

London WC1A 2LP

01-404 5486

Tea from 4.30 p.m.

Seminar starts 5 p.m.

COURSES

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IN A LOCAL VOLUNTARY OR COMMUNITY ORGANISATION?

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Further details from:

The Principal, The Co-operative College, Stanford Hall, Loughborough, Leics, LE12 5QR.

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Graduate School of
Interdisciplinary Women's
Studies

The School is offering a two-year
part-time MA in Interdisciplinary
Women's Studies from **October
1985**.

Further information from:

Terry Ann Lovell,
c/o Department of Sociology,
University of Warwick,
Coventry CV4 7AL.

MEETINGS

THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sunday 17 March 8 p.m. Public Talk 'Meditation & Self-Study.' Wed. 20 March 7.30 p.m. Commemoration 'W.O. Judge' ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

ALTERNATIVES TO THE FUTURE OF MEDIATION IN THE UK.

*The Inaugural Conference of FIRM
(Forum for Initiatives in
Reparation and Mediation)*

The conference will deal with
conciliation in the fields of:
Criminal Justice, Industrial
Relations, and The Family.

Speakers: Laurie Taylor, Lisa
Parkinson, Tony Marshall and Pat
Lowry (Chair of ACAS)

Mon 15 April,

Royal Horticultural Hall,
Victoria.

Details: Martin Farrell,
27 Royal St.,
London SE1 7LL

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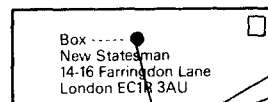
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